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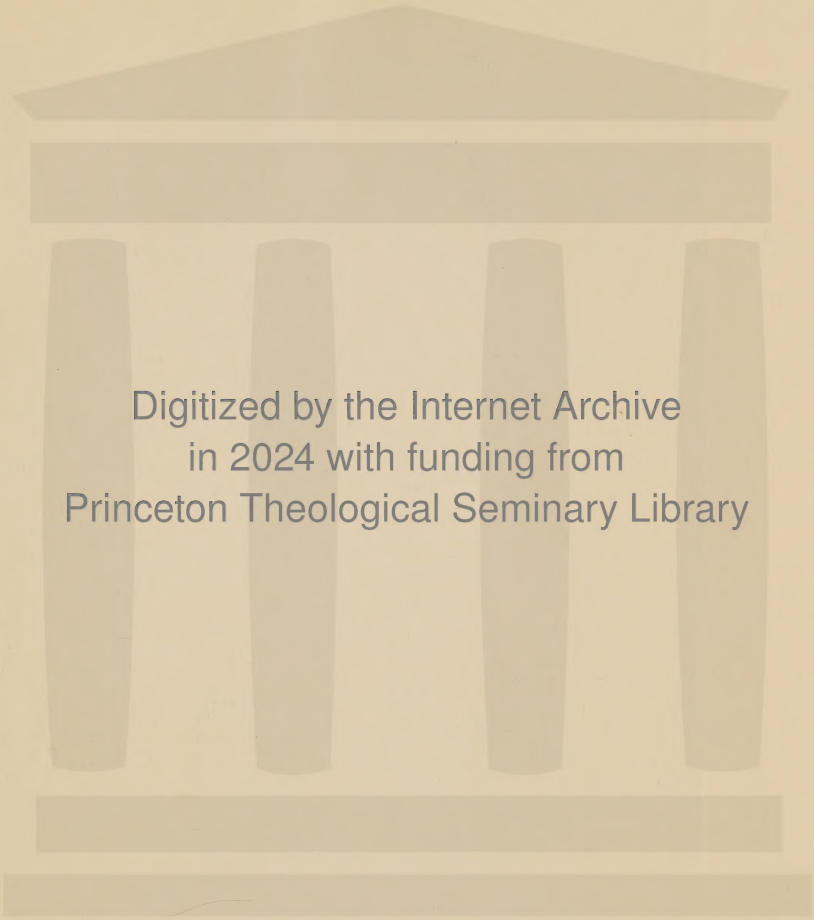
THE CATHEDRALS AND CHURCHES OF BELGIUM



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BRUSSELS

THE CHURCH OF STE. GUDULE

From a water-colour painting by A. Forestier

THE CATHEDRALS AND CHURCHES OF BELGIUM

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BY

T. FRANCIS BUMPUS

Author of "The Cathedrals of England and Wales"
"The Cathedrals of France"
"The Cathedrals and Churches of Italy," etc.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS IN COLOUR, ETC.

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PREFACE

BELGIUM has passed through the devastations of the Great War since Mr Bumpus wrote this book, but after careful investigation the curious fact has emerged, that the churches and cathedrals he describes have, with few exceptions, sustained little damage. When the Germans overran the country their intention was to secure it for themselves, and they were, as a rule, careful to avoid injuring its treasures; they occupied, moreover, several of the towns for the greater part of the War. Certain areas only were war-swept. Ypres, in the successive battles that raged round it, was the chief sufferer; the first shell was fired into it on 7th October 1914, and the last on 14th October 1918, leaving it a heap of ruins. Its beautiful thirteenth-century cathedral and world-famous Cloth Hall were absolutely shattered; all that was left was fragments of the exquisite cloisters, half a wall and a part of the belfry. These relics an Anglo-Belgian Commission has decided to leave untouched as a lasting witness of the horrors of the War. The editor, believing interest will be felt in Mr Bumpus's description of the vanished beauties of the Cloth Hall and cathedral, and in pictures of them in their pristine splendour, has left these in the book. Ypres, in common with the other devastated towns of Belgium, is almost rebuilt; but, unfortunately, in the process of reconstruction Belgium has lost some of its quaint charm; the pleasing diversity of its streets and houses having not infrequently been replaced by a tidy uniformity, and although as dwelling-places they are now, no doubt, more comfortable and sanitary, they have

lost some of their picturesqueness. It is not the first time the country has been devastated. In one century alone Ypres fell four times into the hands of the French after a fierce resistance. As Mr Bumpus says in this book: "For the most part the historical framework of these cities [of Belgium] is always the same, dreary in its monotone luridness—battle, murder and sudden death . . . sieges, sacks . . . then followed pillage and rapine; an entire town razed to the ground, and a few years after rising phœnix-like from its ashes, thriving . . . again." Towns may be restored yet, as Colonel Beckles-Wilson tells us in his little book on Ypres: "For centuries to come they will be digging British bones and British cartridges out of the soil of the Salient." The stupendous task of identifying, as far as possible, and interring the human relics, will not cease until all have been reverently bestowed; and, lest we forget, mementoes of the War are left here and there; in one case a wide area full of shell-holes and craters, strewn with rusted military impedimenta, and upon which not a single tree remains standing, has been left untouched. The Menin Gate, "that portal to misery and horror," has been rebuilt on a sumptuous scale as a "Memorial to the Fallen"; it is a magnificent arch, almost as imposing as the Arc de Triomphe, and has the names of the men who fell in defence of the town inscribed upon it. It was formally opened in July 1927.

It was upon the forts that the Germans concentrated their fire at Namur, but when the bombardments were over the heart of the city was a heap of ruins; the cathedral and museum, however, were practically unhurt, and the fine old bridge that crosses the Meuse was too strong for the military engineers to wreck with their dynamite and only a few of its nine arches were damaged. When Namur was occupied by the Germans they appointed a governor who happened to be a cultured man,

interested in archæology, and he spent much time examining the collections in the Museum. The officials would sometimes point out to him objects of special interest, and on one occasion they directed him to a corner where there is a curious mediæval monument, the headless knight of Hasti-Moulin, on which is engraved the words: "The hour will come when all will be repaid." The governor read the inscription and looked long at the mutilated statue, then, turning to the group who were watching him curiously, he said gravely: "I have understood what you would imply, sirs; the future is in the hands of God."

How changed was picturesque Dinant after the two-days' passage of the Germans. Little remained of the long low bridge except the piers; the cathedral with its queer bulb-shaped spire, the Hôtel de Ville, with its squat tower, the long line of old houses whose quaint colours were reflected in the water, all were in ruins. There was nothing to be seen, as M. Georges Garnier wrote, "but a heap of bricks, a mass of plaster and of disjointed stones"; it was difficult to trace where some of the streets had been. The energy and industry of the inhabitants have, however, already restored it, even to the bulb-shaped spire.

At Furnes, the devastation was not so great, its monuments were not destroyed and when the bombardments were over, from a distance it appeared intact, although a nearer view revealed that scarcely a roof had escaped.

In *The Times* of 9th April 1920, Cardinal Mercier, Primate of Belgium, told the story of the wanton and deliberate burning of the famous Library of Louvain—an act which aroused world-wide indignation. He wrote: "It is established by undeniable proof that fire was set simultaneously to the four corners of the building. At four o'clock in the morning the University Halles, with all the treasures

they contained, were nothing but an immense brazier." American and French generosity, however, have already provided for Louvain another noble Library, possessing great treasures, and even larger than that so barbarously destroyed, for, by the Treaty of Versailles, Germany has been obliged to honour requisitions for books to the value of four million gold marks—the estimated total value of the Library destroyed—besides which, the Library has received many generous donations from scientific societies and private individuals all over the world. The first stone of the new building was laid in August 1921, and two years later the first rooms were opened. The first book to be placed on the shelves contained the names of all the old students of Louvain who had fallen in defence of their country. The chief treasure of Louvain Cathedral, Quentin Matsys' "Holy Family," had rather fortunately been sold to the Brussels Gallery before the War for ten thousand pounds, and there it remained in safety.

There is a subtle irony in the history of that jewel of Ghent painting, "The Adoration of the Lamb," by the brothers Van Eyck, well described by Mr Bumpus, the panels of which had been sold to Berlin before the War by a chapter of canons too ignorant to appreciate their value. When the Germans invaded Belgium their Art journals began to exult in the belief that the masterpiece itself would now rejoin the panels; but the guardian of the picture in Ghent was too wily for the Germans; he hid the picture so cleverly that no efforts on their part could discover it during all the four years of their occupation. More than that, as some reparation for the works of Art destroyed at Louvain, Dinant, Ypres, Dixmude and elsewhere, the Treaty of Versailles forced Berlin to restore to Belgium the panels which had been their pride. The restitution was effected on 3rd July 1920.

Pervyse, Dixmude, Zevecourt, Nieuport, were all

wiped out by German bombs. On the first day of the battle of the Yser, under the heavy bombardments, the tower of Nieuport Church fell in, the whole sanctuary burned like a torch, and soon all that remained was a piece of wall. St Nicolas, the parish church of Dixmude, with its fine rood-loft and Jordaens' picture, "The Adoration of the Magi," was also entirely destroyed. Both towns are being rebuilt. From the railway embankment between Dixmude and Nieuport may be seen all that part of the country which was heroically inundated in 1914, by the Belgians, who opened the sluice gates in order to stop the Germans from piercing their front. The waters forced the enemy to fall back and for four years formed a barrier to the German armies. The front of the Yser was a terror to French, English and Germans alike because of its frightful sea of mud.

Mons was occupied by the Germans from 23rd August 1914 up to the morning of Armistice Day, when, just before eleven o'clock, two Canadian field guns fired the last shells of the War at the retreating Germans. These guns were presented to Mons by the Canadian Government and have been placed as a Memorial in front of the museum.

An eleventh-century Roman crypt, belonging to the Church of Théoduin, at Huy, which had been filled with earth and rubbish when the present church was erected, was rediscovered in 1906 and completely restored.

E. M. Lang.

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The Cathedrals and Churches of Belgium

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY SKETCH

To holiday-makers, and other sojourners abroad, there are, for the most part, two distinct sources of pleasure, the one coming from seeing beautiful scenery, and the other from the contemplation of the wonders wrought by man in bygone ages. Among such wonders, a high place is, of course, accorded to important buildings, and among such buildings few can vie in fascinating attractiveness with ancient cathedrals and churches.

When the travelling season comes round there is perhaps no part of the Continent to which so great a number of our compatriots, desirous of seeking change of scene and climate, annually repair as Belgium, whose admirable railway system, and the facilities which it affords of transit from one point of attraction to another, is in all probability one of the chief inducements.

Considering its extent, there is not a country in Europe which will so richly repay the cultivation of more intimate acquaintance as the highly enlightened one of which this volume treats—scenes to which history intermingling the records of so many nationalities has attached imperishable interest ; and communities of men whose aspirations to excellence and whose triumphs in the advance-

ment of civilisation demand our homage and deserve our increasing respect.

To some experts the architecture of a country, a province, or even a single town, tells a story of religious and political history, of alien invasion, of foreign influence, of the character of the builders. To others, it is a mere record of technicalities, the text for a cold dissertation on relative values and proportions ; they find lectures in stone, but no sermons, a commentary on art, not on human endeavour and aspiration.

The cathedrals and churches of England are wonderful palimpsests, written on, not twice, but half-a-dozen times ; the writing beneath sometimes half obliterated, sometimes obscured, but more often as vivid as that which has been superimposed.

This simile can be applied, but with a less degree of force, perhaps, to those gigantic churches which the Middle Ages reared in the Low Countries ; those " frozen dreams " of men who dreamt nobly ; those buildings which future ages have been able to deface, but never to improve, but which still silently challenge an age full of complacency and discontented with the ideals of a vanished past.

Grand and imposing in their dimensions the churches of the Netherlands indisputably are, but owing to the art never having been in the hands of an organised and educated body like the clergy of France, or to some other local circumstances, the general impression made by them upon the mind is that they are not quite a success. We miss that skill in planning, that elegance of proportion, and that delicacy of execution which are everywhere so conspicuous in the French churches. Examples of Romanesque and Early Pointed Gothic work are to be found at Tournai, Soignies, Nivelles, Liége, Oudenarde, Ypres and elsewhere, but they are comparatively few and far apart, and those in the

former style have in many cases been so altered and modernised as to have lost much of their interest. It is in buildings of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries that Belgium puts forth her strength, and upon which she lavished her wealth, certainly with no mean hand; but they lack refinement, and are really more the evidences of wealth freely given than of true religious feeling, and are, further, an illustration of the fact that money making and active commercial prosperity seem incompatible with true art. While France and England were deeply stirred by religious emotions and a love of adventure, the inhabitants of the Low Countries contented themselves with simpler pursuits and a less excitable life combined with stern independency of feeling. This, productive indeed of more tangible happiness and solid results, failed to call forth the purest samples of art; and wonder as we may at the amplitude and grand proportions of St Rombaut at Malines, St Bavon at Ghent, Nôtre Dame at Antwerp, the choir at Tournai, St Gommaire at Lierre, Ste Gudule at Brussels, Ste Waudru at Mons and St Pierre at Louvain, they are hardly entitled to a place in the first class of European churches. But if for the most part the Belgian churches leave a less satisfactory impression on the mind than those of our own country and of France, it must be remembered that as each country has its own peculiar religious tone, so has each land its own distinctive architecture. That there are powers and excellences in the ecclesiastical architecture of the Netherlands cannot be doubted, though we may not so deeply appreciate them as natives to the manner born.

For generations the opulent burghers of the Netherlands delighted to devote their wealth, with all that sacred art could devise, to the beautifying of these colossal structures, which, from the diversity of the epochs they mark, and the character they bear, sufficiently illustrate a history of the rise and pro-

gress of Gothic architecture and the rebirth of Italian art.

Carving in wood and stone and casting in metal were pursued here from the Middle Ages with a success which is apparent in the altarpieces, roodlofts, tabernacles for the Reserved Sacrament, choir-stalls, organ-cases, reliquaries and other items of ecclesiastical furniture, which occupy their old places in the churches, or are preserved in sacristies and museums.

But above all, perhaps, this country has had the rare distinction, at two different periods, of producing two different schools of painting; the founders of which, in both instances, equalled and even surpassed their contemporaries throughout the whole of Europe in the excellence of their work.

The founders of the two schools of painting were Van Eyck and Rubens, and the numerous works produced by them and their pupils, still existing in Belgium, and nowhere else to be found in equal perfection, form another great attraction of a journey through this country, and will be highly appreciated by every traveller of taste.

The influence of geography and history upon architecture is well known to the expert, but perhaps insufficiently remembered by the general. Belgium is a country which for centuries was so constantly changing its rulers, and shifting its allegiance, that in order to understand the several national peculiarities observable in the construction and embellishment of its churches, some insight into the history of the country is not only necessary to, but greatly enhances, one's appreciation of the more widely visited churches of Antwerp, Bruges, Brussels, Ghent, Liége, Louvain and Malines, and the less familiar ones of Aerschot, Alost, Lierre, Mons, Oudenarde, Tongres and Ypres.

The Netherlands or Low Countries, which now form the two populous kingdoms of Belgium and

Holland, though of second-rate importance when compared with the great European powers, were, at the commencement of the Christian era, mere dreary wastes and disused forests of vast extent, which were frequently overflowed by the sea. This inhospitable region was thinly inhabited by people of German origin called Batavians and Frisians, many of whom lived in miserable huts raised on wooden piles, or built upon mounds of sand, to secure them above the reach of the tides.

But it is not to be understood that the entire region was of this description, although it has been graphically said that whole forests were occasionally thrown down by a tempest or swept away by an inundation—that the sea had no limits and the earth no solidity. The higher grounds, extending from the Rhine to the Scheldt, including that vast extent of woody country, the ancient forest of Ardennes, were inhabited by various tribes of the German race who subsisted by agriculture and the chase. They had towns and villages in the heart of the forest; their country produced abundant supplies of corn and cattle; they were courageous and uncivilised; the rites of Druidism were observed, as in Britain; and the people consisted of two classes, chiefs and serfs.

When the Romans under Julius Cæsar subdued the Gauls, that warlike nation turned their arms also against the people just alluded to, whose country they denominated Gallia Belgica, but they did not pursue their conquests farther towards the north, thinking probably that the desert plains and patches of land, rising as it were from their watery bed, were scarcely worth the trouble of exploring, much less of contending for. They accordingly offered peace and alliance to that part of the Netherlands now called Holland; while the Frisians were left to struggle with the Roman legions for their liberty.

From the writings of Cæsar we learn that Flanders

was occupied by the Menapii and Morini, Brabant by the Arnatici, Hainault and Namur by the Nervii (so remarkable for desperate courage as to excite the wonder of the veterans of Rome), Luxembourg and Limbourg by the Eburones, etc. Cæsar emphatically describes the Belgians as the most warlike of the Gallic tribes, and observes that in stature and bulk they surpassed the Romans. But, though they fought with an energy and a determination which nothing could exceed, the discipline and military skill of the Romans eventually obtained the mastery.

In subduing this brave people, the Romans had recourse to the most barbarous practices of ancient warfare; and for a time either extermination or expulsion seemed to be necessary to conquer their fierce and valiant spirits; thus we read that in Cæsar's celebrated battle with the Nervii near Namur the army of the confederated tribes, amounting to 60,000 men, was reduced to 500, and that on taking the town of Tongres he sold 53,000 of the Arnatici for slaves. By degrees, however, they became incorporated with their conquerors, adopted their manners, and served in their armies, proving themselves, in many memorable instances, the ablest auxiliaries that ever fought by the side of the Roman legions.

In this state they remained for about four centuries, during which time the Belgic population underwent considerable changes from the successive invasions of the Franks from the north, whose progress westward terminated in their establishing the Frankish empire in Gaul.

It is hardly necessary to observe here that, when the Romans subjugated any country, the inhabitants, however barbarous, gradually became acquainted with the arts and advantages of civilised life, and that the subsequent prosperity and rank to which they attained in the scale of nations may justly be

attributed to the connection which subsisted between the conquerors and the conquered. Thus it was with the Belgic provinces. From the Romans they learned how to redeem their inundated lands from the briny flood by constructing dykes, embankments and canals; and as they were naturally an active and intelligent people they drained their marshes and prepared their land not merely as pasture for cattle and the growth of corn, but for the cultivation of rich fruits and vegetables, while towns and villages were built on the higher ground, and the country, instead of being a dreary waste of bogland and water, presented to the eye a varied prospect of fertility and an industrious population.

Towards the declension of the Roman empire, when its rulers were compelled to withdraw their troops from the provinces, Gallia Belgica shared the fate with the rest; and it was successively overrun by the various tribes from the north of Germany. But, notwithstanding these serious disadvantages, the spirit of improvement kept pace with the age; more land was reclaimed from the ocean, and rendered both productive and habitable. The maritime lowland descendants of the Menapii, now blended with Saxons and Frisians, continued to prosper in commerce and agriculture. Large towns had been built, and many arts and manufactures, brought from other countries, were carried on with credit and success. Bruges, Ghent, Antwerp, Liége, Maastricht, Tournai and other towns rose into importance, and the commercial importance of the Flemings was universally acknowledged.

At what precise time the Christian religion was introduced it is impossible to say with certainty, but we know that previous to the reign of Clovis (481-511) a bishop's seat had been established at Tournai, one of its earliest occupants being St Eleutherius, and that before the epoch of Charlemagne the conversion of this part of Europe

had become general through the missionary zeal of such holy men and women as Bavon, Boniface, Eloy, Gertrude, Gudule, Hubert, Lambert, Piat, Rombaut, and Willibrord, whose names are still held in reverence. Monasteries were established in wildernesses of pathless forests, and many of the Belgian towns owe their origin to these settlements around which they grew.

For several centuries the history of the Franks is the history of the Netherlands. Afterwards the country was divided into a number of independent duchies, counties and free cities. Among these may be mentioned the duchies of Brabant, Limbourg, and Luxembourg ; the counties of Flanders, Hainault and Namur ; the bishopric of Liége ; the lordship of Malines, etc. Of these, the county of Flanders was to be superior to all the others, and became distinguished for its industry and commercial activity.

Nor was ecclesiastical art idle, for throughout the length and breadth of the land Romanesque cathedrals and churches gradually gave way to those grandly proportioned edifices which, in the several styles of Pointed Gothic, remain to excite our admiration, not only in the flourishing cities of Ghent and Antwerp and Liége, but in such places from which the glory has departed as Alost, Bruges, Dixmude, Furnes, Lierre, Malines and Oudenarde.

In 1385 the male line of the counts of Flanders became extinct, and their possessions passed into the hands of the dukes of Burgundy, who soon after, in various ways, came into possession of the whole of the Netherlands. In order to strengthen their power they sought to repress the spirit of liberty, and to do away with the free institutions that had sprung up in the country ; but notwithstanding this the people continued to increase in wealth and prosperity, and art and commerce flourished more and more among them.

In 1477 Mary of Burgundy, only daughter and heiress of Charles the Bold, married the Archduke Maximilian, son of the Emperor Frederick IV., and thus the Netherlands came into the possession of the House of Austria.

Maximilian succeeded to the imperial throne in 1493, and in the following year he resigned the government of the Netherlands to his son, Philip, Archduke of Austria, by whose marriage, in 1496, with Joanna, daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella of Castile, there came the strange union of the Netherlands with the kingdoms of Castile and Aragon. Philip died in 1506, leaving a son, Charles, who on the death of his grandfather, Ferdinand, ten years later, became King of Spain, under the title of Charles I. Frederic the Sage, Elector of Saxony, having refused the imperial dignity, which in 1519 had become vacant on the death of Charles' other grandfather, Maximilian, the King of Spain was elected to the empire of Germany, as Charles V. The power now exercised by Charles had thus come to him from different sources, his rule extending over Castile, Aragon, the Netherlands, Germany, Milan, Naples and Sicily, besides the newly discovered territories in South America. But over all these he ruled by a different title and exercised a different power. One great object of his reign was to make his power supreme in each of his dominions, and to weld them together by means of a common administrative system. In the Netherlands Charles saw the necessity of behaving with moderation, and of respecting the constitutional privileges of the several provinces. On this account, therefore, the Low Countries were loyal to him ; they looked upon him as a native prince, for he had been born at Ghent, and had been brought up among them.

In 1555 Charles resigned his hereditary dominions to his son Philip, and finding it impracticable to

secure for him the empire also,[1] he transferred all his claims of allegiance from the Germanic body to his brother Ferdinand and, either disgusted with the pomp of power, and the projects of ambition, or sickened by repeated disappointments, sought happiness in quiet obscurity, retiring to St Just, a monastery of the Order of the Jeronymites, in the province of Estremadura, where he died, 1st September 1558.

Philip, who had been brought up in Castile, was a thorough Spaniard. The ignorance and bigotry of a closely restricted monkish education had crushed his intellectual faculties and rendered him insusceptible of all generous feeling.

Proud and reserved, gloomy and morose both in court and council, his self-isolation was encouraged and confirmed by the austere dignity of Spanish manners. Thus he had grown up with but little sympathy for men, whose companionship he had never known, and whom he estimated solely as the instruments of his will.

What he had learned of human nature had merely made him distrustful, and the unscrupulous casuistry of his spiritual guides, his own crafty, cold and patient habits of thought, had taught him to conceal distrust beneath the deepest dissimulation. No man possessed greater powers of self-control. Slow in deciding, inflexible in decision, awaiting with calmness the development of events, shrinking from no labour, unscrupulous in the employment of means, but little was wanting to ensure his ends. He was religious, but his darkened spirit, the joyless nature of his heart, and the influence of his education, had converted religion into a gloomy superstition. Accepting with abject submission what the Church taught, he regarded with horror the exercise of private judg-

[1] Philip's Spanish education, and his gloomy and bigoted character, inspired the Germans with an aversion as unconquerable as that with which he beheld them. Thus there was, on both sides, an insuperable bar to such an arrangement.

ment ; the slightest deviation from her teaching was heresy, and for heresy there was but one punishment —death. That he was conscientious in this respect none can doubt ; his cruelty was the consequence of his unsympathetic nature and his strong convictions.

Philip's coldness, haughtiness and pride gave great offence to the Flemings ; his reserve seemed to them contemptuous. Yet they were loyal to him at first. It was the troops of the Netherlands that won for him the decisive battle of St Quentin against the troops of Henri II. of France under the gallant Coligny, and enabled him to make with that country the Peace of Câteau Cambresis, in 1559.

This having been concluded, Philip quitted the Netherlands, with a resolution never to return. As regent, he appointed his half-sister, Margaret, a natural daughter of Charles V., and widow of Octavius, Duke of Parma, and placed near her person the Cardinal Granvella, Bishop of Arras, a man of acute and energetic mind, blindly devoted to his service. This appointment greatly offended the Dutch, who, instead of receiving a native stadtholder, either the Prince of Orange or Count Egmont, in compliance with their wishes, beheld a base-born stranger at the head of the government.

Philip, instead of making use of the nobility against the inferior classes, by this step impolitically roused their anger ; suspicious and wayward, he preferred a throne secured by violence to one, like that of his father, ill sustained by intrigue.

With the view of effectually checking the progress of the Reformation, which had found many adherents in the Netherlands under the rule of Charles V., Philip resolved upon an increase in the episcopate.

Until 1558 there were but six bishoprics in the Netherlands, those of Arras, Cambrai, Liége, Thérouanne, Tournai and Utrecht. Liége and Utrecht were under the jurisdiction of Cologne, the others were subject to Rheims.

It seemed proper that the prelates of the Low Countries should owe no extra-provincial allegiance. It was likewise thought that three millions of souls required more than six spiritual superintendents.

Dr Francis Sonnius had been sent on a mission to the Pope for the purpose of representing the necessity of an increase in the episcopal force of the Netherlands.

Just as Philip was taking his departure the commissioner arrived bringing with him the Bull of Paul IV. dated 18th May 1559. The document stated that " Paul IV., slave of slaves, wishing to provide for the welfare of the Provinces, and the eternal salvation of their inhabitants, had determined to plant in that fruitful field several new bishoprics. The enemy of mankind being abroad," said the Bull, " in so many forms at that particular time, and the Netherlands, then under the sway of that beloved son of his Holiness, Philip the Catholic, being compassed about with heretics and schismatic nations, it was believed that the eternal welfare of the land was in great danger. At the period of the original establishment of cathedral churches, the provinces had been sparsely peopled ; they had now become filled to over-flowing, so that the original ecclesiastical arrangement did not suffice. *The harvest was plentiful, but the labourers were few.*"

In consideration of these and other reasons, three archbishoprics were accordingly appointed. That of Malines was to be principal, under which were constituted six bishoprics, those namely of Antwerp, Bois-le-Duc, Roermond, Ghent, Bruges and Ypres. That of Cambrai was to be second, with the four subordinate dioceses of Tournai, Arras, Saint Omer and Namur. The third archbishopric was that of Utrecht, with the five sees of Haarlem, Middleburg, Leeuwarden, Groningen and Deventer.

This unconstitutional decree gave general discontent ; to the nobility, whose influence was

necessarily diminished by the appointment of an additional number of churchmen; to the people, on account of their secret inclination to, and recognition of, the Reformed Church; and to the clergy, whose ancient possessions were thus arbitrarily partitioned among a number of new-comers. The representations made by every class were disregarded; Granvella enforced the execution of the decree, erected the new bishoprics, and commenced a bitter persecution of the heretics. The Dutch, nevertheless, did not overstep the bounds of obedience, but revenged themselves on the cardinal by open mockery and the publication of caricatures, which rendered the country hateful to him, and he took his departure in 1564.

The Netherlands had patiently permitted the imposition of the new bishoprics and the new resolutions of the Council of Trent, and would, no doubt, have remained tranquil, but for the attempt of Philip to introduce the Inquisition, which at once raised a serious opposition. A deep determination to resist this institution spread among all classes of society, amongst patriotic Catholics as amongst the threatened Protestants.

This feeling, early in 1566, found its expression in what is known as the "Compromise" which was laid in the form of a petition before the regent, Margaret of Parma, on the 5th of April of that year, by some two hundred nobles.

Margaret gave them a friendly reception, but, incapable of acting in the affair without authority from Philip, promised to inform him of their request. One of her counsellors, Berlaymont, on seeing the approach of the deputation, had exclaimed, to cheer her: "What, madam, is it possible your Highness can fear these beggars [*gueux*]?"

The saying spread, and the confederates in bravado adopted the badge of a beggar's wallet and called themselves "the beggars" (*les gueux*).

The nobles, piqued at the contemptuous silence with which their petition was treated by the king, now ventured to prescribe a term for the reception of his reply. A great popular tumult, in which the nobles were partially implicated, broke out simultaneously. On the 18th of August was the ceremony of the Ommegang, or procession of a miraculous image of the Virgin at Antwerp. As the priests swept through the streets they were greeted by the jeers of the crowd—"Mayken! Mayken! [Little Mary]," they exclaimed, "your hour is come!" For the next two days there were riots in the cathedral; at last the crowd was roused to fury; the image was demolished, and the furniture of the church, to the irreparable injury of many beautiful works of native art, destroyed. The example was followed in other churches of Antwerp, and soon spread to other towns. A wave of iconoclasm passed over the Low Countries, and a few days in the middle of August 1566, sufficed to destroy an immense number of the treasures which the art, skill and devotion of centuries had accumulated.

The nobles were, however, finally constrained by the stadtholderess to come to terms.

The Calvinists in Tournai and Valenciennes alone made a stubborn resistance, but were compelled to yield.

Egmont, anxious for the maintenance of tranquillity, and for the continuance of the royal favour, acted with great severity.

Philip, without either ratifying or declaring against the terms of peace, proclaimed a general amnesty, and announced his speedy arrival in the Netherlands, and his desire to fulfil the wishes of his people. Lulled suspicion was, however, speedily reawakened by the news of the approach, not of the king, but of his ferocious commander-in-chief, the Duke of Alva, an able soldier but sanguinary prosecutor, who boasted that in less than six years he

had put to death 18,000 men and women by the sword, the gibbet, the rack and the flames.

The more spirited of the nobles advised instant recourse to arms, and the defence of the frontier against the approaching army, but were overruled by the moderate party, which hesitated to rebel against a monarch whose intentions were merely suspected.

William of Orange, Count of Nassau, the wealthy possessor of Chalons Orange, stadtholder of Holland, Zeeland and Utrecht, surnamed the Silent, on account of his reserve, whose talents had endeared him to Charles V., vainly warned his friends of the danger they incurred.

The Counts Egmont and Horn remained incredulous, and William, unable to persuade the states to make a resolute opposition before the mask was openly dropped by Philip, resolved to secure his safety by flight.

On taking leave of Egmont he said, "I fear you will be the first over whose corpse the Spaniards will march!" Some of the nobles mockingly called after him as he turned away, "Adieu, Prince Lackland!" He rejoined, "Adieu, headless sirs!"

Numerous adherents to the new faith, and wealthy manufacturers, alarmed at the threatening aspect of affairs, quitted the country, many withdrawing to England, where they were welcomed by Elizabeth.

One hundred thousand men, more than would have sufficed for the defence of the country against the Spaniards had the states been resolute and united, emigrated.

At first Alva displayed the greatest mildness, received Egmont and the rest of the nobles with open arms and overwhelmed them with civility, called no one to account, took no step without convoking the estates, and inspired such confidence that numbers of the more timid who had withdrawn were

induced to quit their strongholds and to return to Brussels.

But the certainty of the intended absence of the Prince of Orange caused him after a few weeks to throw off the mask, and inviting the Counts Egmont and Horn to a conference he unexpectedly placed them under arrest, 9th September 1567, and from this moment cast away the scabbard to bathe his sword in the blood of the unsuspecting Netherlanders.

The regent, Margaret, was, under pretext of a secret order from the king, sent out of the country, and a criminal court, which passed judgment upon all who confessed heretical tenets, had signed the "Compromise," or been implicated in the disturbances, was appointed. The confiscation of property was the principal purpose for which this court was instituted, and numerous wealthy proprietors were accused and beheaded, though guiltless of offence. Among the sufferers were Egmont and Horn, who were beheaded in front of the Hôtel de Ville at Brussels, 5th June 1568; the most horrid cruelties were perpetrated upon the Netherlanders; the country was devastated in every direction, and scaffolds were erected in every city. But Alva's severity, so far from having broken the spirit of the Netherlanders, had only stirred them up to the most stubborn resistance; he was weary of his task, and Philip was convinced of the failure of his measures. He was consequently allowed to return to Spain, where soon after, on a slight pretext, he and his son were imprisoned; nor was Alva restored to favour till his military talents were required for an expedition against Portugal.

For the next three years (1573-1576) the Netherlands were governed by Don Luis de Requesens, under whom and his successors, Don John of Austria, the natural brother of Philip II., and Alexander Farnese, Prince of Parma, son of Margaret, Duchess of Parma,

who had been regent when the troubles in the Netherlands first broke out, a more pacific policy was adopted.

The latter continued to take advantage of the differences between the Catholic and Protestant states. The Walloon provinces of the south, which were all Catholic, entered into a separate union. William of Orange, by the Union of Utrecht, combined the seven provinces of Gelderland, Overyssel, Holland, Zeeland, Utrecht, Groningen and Friesland to defend themselves against Spain, and maintain their religious liberties.

This Union of Utrecht was the foundation of the Netherlands Republic. These seven provinces held together under the guidance of the Prince of Orange ; the other ten provinces gradually fell back into the hands of Spain, though on tolerably advantageous terms, as there were no religious difficulties in the way. Subsequently this portion of the Netherlands passed into the hands of Austria, remaining a dependency of that power until 1792, when the battle of Jemappes, fought on the 6th of November, between the Austrian forces under the Archduke Albrecht, and those of the French Republic under Dumouriez and the Duc de Chartres, afterwards King Louis Philippe, resulted in that victory which led to the conquest of all Flanders by the French.

Under the republican *régime* the Church in Belgium suffered equally with that of France. Its revenues were confiscated, religion was proscribed, the bishops, clergy and monastic orders were driven into exile, and the churches, cathedrals, conventual houses and colleges closed, and in not a few instances destroyed altogether.

This state of affairs continued until 1801 when, to the great joy of the people, religious order was restored to Belgium by Napoleon. The archiepiscopal see of Malines was restored, with Tournai, Ghent, Namur, Liége, Aix-la-Chapelle, Treves and

Mayence as suffragan to it, but those of Antwerp, Bruges, Ypres and Roermond were not re-established.

Subsequently, however, about 1827, the see of Bruges was restored, and at the present day forms with those of Tournai, Ghent, Namur and Liége one of the six dioceses into which, with Malines as the primatial see, Belgium is divided.

By the Peace of 1815 all the provinces of the Netherlands were made into one kingdom, but fifteen years later this union broke down from incompatibility of temper. In 1830 the southern provinces revolted. Then the kingdom was divided : the northern part, which had been the United Provinces, continued as the kingdom of the Netherlands in the House of Orange, while the formerly Spanish and afterwards Austrian Netherlands became a separate monarchy under the House of Coburg, the first king being Leopold, who had been husband of the Princess Charlotte of England.

At the commencement of the last century Belgium was subdivided by France, under whom it then was, into departments, named from the rivers or other local features. With the establishment of the kingdom in 1830, Belgium had its former Flemish counties restored to it—Brabant in the centre containing the seat of royalty—Brussels, with Antwerp ; East Flanders with its capital, Ghent ; and West Flanders with Bruges as its chief town.

On the east and south lie the provinces of Limbourg, Liége, Namur, Luxembourg and Hainault, all more or less mountainous districts, and offering in their products of coal, iron, stone, marble, clay and timber, nearly all the materials requisite for building.

West Flanders was once the most important province from its long line of sea-board, with the ports of Dunkirk, Furnes, Nieuport, Ostend, Sluys and Damme. The last, now a mere fishing village, was once a strongly fortified town containing more than 2500 inhabitants, who early in the

thirteenth century destroyed a fleet of 1200 ships sent against them by Philippe Auguste of France in the Bay of the Zwyn, which has now been long warped up, the sea having retired nearly six miles. It was the retreat of the sea at Damme that led to the downfall of Bruges. The French shortly after burnt Damme, but in 1382 it was so strongly fortified that it resisted for a considerable time an army of 80,000 men, and was forced to capitulate only from the want of fresh water. The grassy ramparts still indicate the site of massive bastions and extensive lines of fortification, while its name denotes that, like Ostend, Furnes and Nieuport, the besieged could inundate the surrounding country so long as they held the dam or floodgates, so that there was a dam to retain the supply of fresh water which was converged to them by the Bruges Canal.

Above the trees lining the canals and roads are seen some few of the plain brick towers of the village churches, with their high-pitched tiled roofs, their apses and their crosses. On the canal from Bruges to Sluys, the first is the fine old thirteenth-century brick tower of the church at Damme, which is over 150 feet in height.

The nave, aisles and transepts were destroyed at the close of the eighteenth century by the French Revolutionists, by whom the churches were either converted into "Temples of Reason," or used as cavalry stables, warehouses and what not; the bells were coined into money, stamped with the cap of Liberty, and the fine painted glass and richly carved woodwork sold to curiosity hunters, not a little of it finding its way to England.[1]

The nave of the church at Damme did not exceed

[1] In the church of Cockayne Hatley, Bedfordshire, restored between 1820 and 1830 by the Hon. and Rev. H. C. Cust, is a great deal of Belgian wood-carving. That in the chancel and the stalls came from the Benedictine Abbey of Alne on the Sambre, near Charleroi. The abbey was fired and partly destroyed by the French when Dumouriez entered Flanders in 1794, and the

80 feet in length, but the choir was more than 100 feet from the eastern face of the transept to the chord of the apse, and 36 feet wide in the clear.

The aisles are each 28 feet wide, and the clustered pillars, of 5 feet each, give more than 100 feet total width.

The windows have moulded bricks externally, but within, the capitals, bases, shafts, piers, pillars, string courses and mouldings are of a hard blue stone from Ecaussines in Hainault, near Nivelles. In most parts of Belgium the hard blue stone (somewhat akin to our blue or black mountain limestone from Skipton in Craven) is named by the French "Pierre d'Ecaussines" and by the Belgians "Orduyn Stean." It is used for decorative purposes only, the cost of working almost preventing its common use. A stone somewhat similar in appearance, but softer, is obtained from the weald formation near Tournai; it is known as Tournai stone, and is sometimes used for building, but generally for paving. It bears some resemblance to our Kentish Rag, but is rather darker in colour.

While on the subject of stones, allusion may be made to a very dark brown ironstone used on the exterior of the Church of Nôtre Dame des Dominicains at Louvain, where it alternates very pleasingly with a stone of lighter hue. At Diest and at Aerschot, both neighbouring to Louvain, the use of this ironstone seemed very prevalent. In several of the Liége churches a light yellow stone has been employed, chiefly for the groining ribs and the arches of triforia, while red brick seems to have been almost universally used for filling in the vaults of

woodwork passed into the hands of a dealer, from whom it was bought by Mr Cust. The date of this carving is 1689, recorded, with the arms of the abbey, on two of the stalls. The altar rail, the pulpit, the doors separating the tower from the nave, and the wooden screen of the "family pew," are from various other Belgian churches.

churches. For Belgium abounds with clay suitable for brickmaking, and the effect this had upon architecture, more especially in West Flanders, was remarkable. The Cathedral of St Sauveur and the Church of St Gilles at Bruges may be cited as particularly interesting specimens of brick architecture, though they do not exhibit that fancy and exuberance of ornamentation in which the architects of the great churches raised upon the sandy plains of Brandenburg and Pomerania so delighted to indulge.

Advancing eastward from Bruges along the canal, the church towers of Oostkerke, Honcke, Lisseweghe,[1] West Capelle and others are seen, and point out the locality of the several villages, the church of Damme being the type of the whole series, but of more importance. On the east side of the road to Blankenberg all the churches have square towers, while on the west, even to the frontier of France, they have all variously contoured spires.

The bricks used are similar in dimensions to those of England, but there is a small compact red brick called by the natives "Brabant Steen," resembling the old Roman brick in quality, and which, set in Dutch tarras, makes a very sound work. In some of the oldest buildings a large brick has been used of ordinary proportions, but a third larger; it may be seen in the churches, town halls and gates, and being of unmixed clay has remained very perfect.

Commines, Courtrai, Menin, Roulers, Thourout and Ypres, with many other towns, contain large brick churches, and their brick buildings present the same general features as those of Bruges. Indeed from Calais all the way to Ypres, all the small towns

[1] The tower of Lisseweghe is a truly noble specimen of Early Gothic work, its bold buttresses, and deeply recessed belfry windows being especially worthy of study. A masterly drawing of this tower by Mr H. J. Austin is given in the second series of "The Spring Gardens Sketch Book," an invaluable repertory, published in 8 vols. folio, between 1866 and 1891.

are full of beautiful specimens of brickwork, furnishing a most valuable field for study.

Brick was also largely used in other parts of the country in the construction of those Neo-Classical churches which arose during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The cathedral at Namur was, externally at least, constructed of brick, about 1750, also several churches in Brussels and Liége of the same period.

At Liége, St Jean l'Evangéliste was rebuilt, with the exception of its steeple, on the lines of the Romanesque church, which with its western tower, octagonal domed nave, and short choir, was an imitation of the old Dom of Charlemagne at Aix-la-Chapelle.

The ecclesiastical architecture of Belgium may, on the whole, be considered essentially German in spirit, the style of detail, the disposition and the character of the buildings of all the epochs of Gothic showing the Teutonic origin of the people. On the other hand much of the thirteenth-century work was inspired directly from France, while that of the latest Flamboyant epoch reflects the influence of the Spanish domination.

Notwithstanding this intermixture of race, change of rulers and shifting of allegiance, the churches built between the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries display a decidedly independent feeling, which gives them a singular identity of appearance in the interior, and at the same time a manifest peculiarity of character. This is apparent chiefly in the very general employment, through all the epochs of Pointed Gothic, of the plain and well-proportioned cylindrical column for the arcades of nave and choir, of the lofty clerestory, the western tower, and the apse—aisleless when built under German influence, and surrounded by the procession path and corona of chapels when under that of France. The elongation of the transept, and the one western tower instead of two,

may be mentioned as features especially characteristic of Belgian church architecture.

With regard to this admixture of the French and German elements in the architecture of the Low Countries, a contemporary writer observes:

"The intimate connection of the Bishop of Liége with the Empire would tend to continue the German influence on the buildings of his province, and we are therefore not surprised to have so little similarity between the great churches of St Jacques and St Martin at Liége and contemporary buildings of the same class in France. In Flanders other causes led to a continuance of German influence. The establishment of a Kontor of the Hansa at Bruges brought the Flemings into close and continual communication with the German merchants, and although it was with the civil edifices that they were mainly concerned, we find that it was Jan Van de Poele, the architect of their own building and of the Franc de Bruges, who designed the apsidal chapels of St Sauveur at Bruges, the unmistakable German character of which is very evident.

"In Brabant, the buildings show a nearer approach, both in plan and detail, to French models, perhaps due to the residence of the Burgundian dukes in Brussels, as with the churches of Bois-le-Duc, and Lierre, and the choir of St Martin at Alost."

In Belgium, French influence manifested itself during the first quarter of the thirteenth century in the choirs of St Martin at Ypres and of Ste Gudule at Brussels. Up to this period the methods of the Rhenish school had obtained in the Low Countries, and the setting aside of these methods in favour of the new system of France is significant of the high repute of the latter throughout Europe. For the evidence of this fact is to be found in the great churches of Ghent, Tongres, Bruges and Leau, amongst others which were either built between 1235 and 1300, or at any rate begun during this

period, to be completed in the fourteenth century or even later.

It has been said that the Flemings were the mere chapmen of Europe, stealing what ideas they met with on the road and reproducing them at home.

This was not the case, since no people have more often shown originality in art than the inhabitants of the Low Countries. The countrymen of the Van Eycks and Rubens were no mere copyists in their architecture and kindred crafts; a comparison between their buildings and their accessories a very short sojourn among the Belgian churches will suffice to show; and where great similarity exists, an examination of dates disposes of the charge. When the Italian Renaissance came, no nation set itself to study its spirit so profoundly, or so quickly and completely grafted its beauties on to their own art. They were the masters who taught us how to adapt and fit its architecture and ornament to the needs of our damp climate without sacrificing its beauties, and helped its introduction into Germany, and even into France and Spain. Such examples as the southern portal of St Jacques at Liége and the soaring Tabernacle at Leau sufficiently prove this.

The Romanesque churches of Belgium are fairly numerous, but, modelled as they are for the most part upon the much finer examples in the Rhine Provinces and Saxony, cannot be said to add anything very fresh to our knowledge of that period of architecture, nor can they, with but few exceptions, compete in size or richness with those of France and England. Generally speaking, they exist in places lying on routes little frequented by English tourists—even the grandest example of Belgian Romanesque, the Cathedral of Tournai, is hardly known, whereas it is of far greater interest to the student than those of Antwerp, Ghent and Malines, which everyone goes to see.

As a rule, much of the primitive feeling hangs

about the Romanesque architecture of Belgium down to the time when it began to give way to the Pointed. The towers especially are tall, square and unbuttressed, sometimes assuming the form of a lofty façade with turrets attached to its north and south sides, as, for instance, at Nôtre Dame, Maastricht and St Denys, Liége; while of that wonderful grouping of the many towers of the German churches which goes on through the whole Romanesque, and which gradually dies out with the development of Gothic, and which is a purely Teutonic feature, having little if anything like it either in France, England or Italy, the cathedral at Tournai and the churches at Maastricht and Roermond present examples as striking as those at Cologne, Laach, Speyer and Worms.

Of the oldest churches in Belgium, a large proportion are known to us only by tradition, having been removed to make way for the larger and more splendid buildings which were demanded by the continually increasing wealth and population of the cities. In several instances, what must have been a fine Romanesque interior, was remodelled in Neo-Classic during the eighteenth century. Considering the paucity of buildings in Belgium of a date prior to the thirteenth century this is a very great loss to art, although the new arrangement which has replaced it is in most instances remarkably well designed. St Barthélemy and St Denys at Liége, and Ste Gertrude at Nivelles, are churches which, while preserving their Romanesque character externally, have had their interiors completely remodelled in the several orders of Neo-Classic.

One of the most interesting of Belgian Romanesque churches is that of Celle near Dinant. Situated in one of the most beautiful valleys of the Ardennes, this church is a good example of the style, probably of the eighth or ninth century, and though not large deserves a somewhat detailed description.

It is cruciform, with a circular apse, aisles to both choir and nave, and tower at the west end. The whole remains in its original state. The apse has two adjacent circular-headed windows on each side, and is waggon-vaulted.

The ritual choir is formed within the transept bay, and the first bay of the nave ; on the north and south is a solid wall pierced at the north-west by three circular-headed openings, such as in an English village church we should be sure to hear called confessionals.

The choir arch, enormously massy and circular, has been corbelled off in First Pointed work. The transepts have circular apses on their eastern sides. These apses are leans-to on the choir, and over their arches are two round-headed windows which appear externally one on each side of the roof.

In the south transept is a Romanesque piscina.

The nave has five bays, including that occupied by the choir seats, the piers being exceedingly rude, square, with square bases and square capitals. In each bay is a large, round-headed clerestory window.

Externally the church is arcaded in pilaster work, of the very rudest description, exactly resembling these piers. Under the choir is a small crypt, to which there is a descent of eight steps ; the plan three bays, divided by a square pier with plain capital and no base ; the vaulting has no ribs. At the east end are three lancets.

The tower is very massy and rude, with a circular turret on each side, like those at Maastricht, St Denys, Liége and Nivelles ; it is arcaded, and the passage into the turrets, north and south, exhibits rudeness of work which is perhaps hardly equalled even in any of the pre-Norman churches in England. The tower and turrets are now capped with spires.

One of the most remarkable views of this church at Celle is to be had from about two hundred yards to the north-east.

The insignificance of both transepts and choir, compared to the size of the nave, the three circular apses, and the extraordinarily rude manner in which the transept apses are made leans-to to the choir, have a very peculiar effect.

Within this church is a low tomb, an immense slab of the black marble of the Ardennes, supported on crouching figures, and very well sculptured in bas-relief with the Crucifixion, and two kneeling figures presented by their patron saints, the man by the woman, and *vice versa*, to Our Lord. The date is the middle of the sixteenth century.

Other interesting and important examples of Romanesque work in Belgium are the nave of Tournai Cathedral; St Vincent at Soignies; portions of St Servais and Nôtre Dame at Maastricht, and of St Nicholas and St Jacques at Ghent; St Ursmer at Lobbes; the lower part of the cathedral tower and the Chapel of the Holy Blood at Bruges; the tower of St Jean l'Evangéliste, the façades of St Barthélemy, St Jacques and St Denys, and the nave arcade of St Christophe at Liége; the central portion of Nôtre Dame de la Chapelle at Brussels; the crypt of the church at Anderlecht, near that city; the central tower of the church at Messines, near Ypres; and the cloisters at Nivelles and Tongres.

To the period of the transition from the round arched to the Pointed Gothic—*i.e.* the latter part of the twelfth century—must be assigned the transepts of the cathedral, and portions of several churches, at Tournai; the tower and western transepts of St Germain at Tirlemont; the greater part of Nôtre Dame at Roermond; the western apse and steeple of Ste Croix at Liége; the lower part of the tower of St Pierre at Ypres, a fragment of the abbey at Orval in Luxembourg; the choir and transepts of the abbey at Villers, near Genappe; and the Church of St Martin at St Trond.

The following are some of the best and most

interesting specimens of the First Pointed style (*style ogivale primitiv*) as practised in Belgium during the first half of the thirteenth century :—

The choirs of St Martin at Ypres,[1] and of Ste Gudule and Nôtre Dame de la Chapelle at Brussels ; St Jacques and La Madeleine at Tournai ; Nôtre Dame de Pamèle at Oudenarde ; the choir of St Leonard at Leau ; Ste Walburge at Furnes ; the Church of Lisseweghe, near Bruges ; the apse of Nôtre Dame at Dinant ; portions of Nôtre Dame at Tongres and Bruges ; the southern portal of St Servais at Maastricht, and the nave and refectory of the abbey church of Villers.

With the increase of wealth and prosperity church building was carried on with great vigour from the middle of the thirteenth century almost to the end of the sixteenth. In fact there is hardly a second-rate town that cannot boast a church of more or less importance raised during the Geometrical and Flamboyant epochs of Gothic, as, for instance, Alost, Dixmude, Huy and Lierre, while as for Bruges, Ghent, Liége and Malines, they must have been in their palmy days like cities full of cathedrals, thus affording a striking contrast to our own cities, in which the parish churches are, generally speaking, small. At Bruges and Liége the original cathedrals were destroyed, when, on the abolition of the Austrian government in the Netherlands in 1794, the whole country was transformed into a Belgian republic under Dumouriez, a characterless Jacobin intriguant, who had succeeded Lafayette in the command of the French armies. The bishops, however, were able to find churches of almost equal grandeur to which, on the re-establishment of religious order, they transferred their chairs.

To the period comprised between the second half of the thirteenth century and the first half of the succeeding one — a period of great architectural activity throughout Northern Europe—the

[1] See Appendix.

following large and important works must be assigned :—

The choirs of the cathedrals at Bruges, Ghent and Tournai, and the nave of that at Malines ; Ste Croix, Liége ; the churches of Aerschot and Diest ; and a considerable portion of Nôtre Dame at Huy.

All these examples belong to what we should term in England the Geometrical period of the Middle Pointed style, though, except in some points of detail, there is little to distinguish them from those which fill up the next two centuries. The list of these is a much lengthier one, and includes such majestic structures as Nôtre Dame at Hal ; the nave of Ste Walburge at Oudenarde ; Nôtre Dame, St Paul and St Jacques at Antwerp ; Ste Waudru at Mons ; St Germain at Tirlemont ; St Pierre at Louvain and St Michel at Ghent ; the naves of Ste Gudule, Nôtre Dame des Victoires and Nôtre Dame de la Chapelle at Brussels ; the eastern parts of Nôtre Dame at Tongres ; St Martin at Alost and St Hubert in Luxembourg, St Gommaire at Lierre ; the nave of St Bavon (the cathedral) at Ghent ; and, at Liége, the upper parts of the nave, the chapels, and the cloisters of the cathedral ; St Jacques, St Martin and the apse of St Denys.

It must not be supposed that all these imposing structures were raised *d'un seul jet* upon sites where no church had been before. They are only the successors of much earlier buildings which were gradually removed as circumstances required, but in most cases so effectually that very few of their remains have come down to the present day.

That gradual development of style, and that variety in planning which lends such an infinite interest to English Gothic work of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, is by no means so conspicuous in that of Belgium during the same period. Most of the great churches named in the foregoing lists seem to have been laid out on one uniform plan, comprising

an apsidal choir with aisles, and generally a procession path and chapels radiating therefrom ; transepts, deeper as a rule than the French ones ; a nave, and, in the generality of cases, a western tower. The pillars of the nave arcade are usually lofty and of cylindrical form ; the triforium, even down to the extinction of the Pointed style, plays an important part in the internal elevation ; while the clerestory windows are so designed that they completely fill the bays, thus getting rid of that wall space on either side which is too often a displeasing feature in many of the best complete Gothic churches of Germany.

The faults, if faults they may be called, of these great Belgian churches seem to be an over-grandeur of conception, which it has seldom or never been found possible to execute ; an excessive fancifulness of outline ; and an unequal and arbitrary distribution of ornament and decoration ; consequently, the finest churches have a somewhat ragged and untidy look.

It has been remarked earlier in these pages that the singular identity of internal appearance presented by the greater number of the Pointed Gothic churches of Belgium is mainly due to the employment of the plain cylindrical shaft, more or less tall, for the arcades of the nave, choir and apse. In such early thirteenth-century examples as the choir of St Martin at Ypres, the church at Lisseweghe, St Jacques at Tournai, and Nôtre Dame de Pamèle at Oudenarde, the bell of the capital is very elongated, has an octagonal abacus, and is covered more or less profusely with that *à crochet* type of ornamentation which recalls the Burgundian style rather than that of Champagne and the country around Paris. For instance, the columns in the choir at Ypres bear a very close resemblance to those in the nave of Nôtre Dame at Dijon.

A better example of the right kind of thing in stone-carving can hardly be exhibited than in many

of the capitals of these Early Pointed churches of Belgium. The large conventional leaves and lobes of these capitals—treated in bold rounded masses, completely recognise and emphasise the nature of the material in which they are executed ; and however we may admire the dexterity and sleight of hand displayed in the attempt at literal imitation of foliage in late Gothic carving, and still more perhaps in some of the modern Revived Gothic work, one cannot help feeling that these are less satisfactory than the older style of treatment, because they are an attempt at what never can be really done—viz. the literal imitation of natural leafage in stone ; and because even the imperfect attempt cuts up the stone into such thin and sharp edges as must render the lengthened preservation of the work somewhat doubtful. This last remark refers of course to work of the Gothic Revival, during which more elaborate *tours de force* of this kind have been attempted than were ever aimed at in the most florid days of the genuine Gothic period, and with a doubtful result.

As the style progressed, the bell of the capital became much reduced in size, and its leafage, which, instead of being sculptured out of the block itself was not infrequently carved separately and then fastened into its place, became more delicate, sometimes assuming the form of a mere wreath.

This type of column continued in use down to the very latest period of the style, and as it is observed, as often as not, throughout churches whose parts are the work of different epochs, it is difficult, in the absence of documentary evidence, to assign dates with certainty.

In spite of their tautology, it must be admitted that these rows of tall round columns in the churches of Lierre, Malines, Oudenarde, Tongres, Ypres and other places produce an effect of much grandeur and solidity. Sir Gilbert Scott appears to have been much influenced by them, and in several of his

works has evinced much skill in engrafting upon our insular forms what, in Middle Pointed architecture, is a purely foreign feature.

In Belgium the vaulting shaft is rarely carried down the column, one of the few instances of this arrangement occurring at Huy. It is usually stopped at the string course between the pier arches and the triforium.

In St Germain at Tirlemont, and the parish church at Aerschot, the circular columns have no capitals, the arch mouldings dying off into them. In Ste Waudru at Mons, Nôtre Dame at Antwerp, St Pierre at Louvain and the abbey church at St Hubert, we find a similar arrangement, but with angular piers.

In the Church of St Nicholas at Furnes there is a very charming kind of pillar, which the writer remembers to have seen used in St Michel de Vaucelles at Caen and the elegant Church of Nôtre Dame de l'Epine near Chalons-sur-Marne.

At Furnes, the pier, which is square and somewhat stumpy, is set diagonally, and at each cardinal point is a slender shaft whose foliaged capital unites with that of the central core. The bases are rather tall, and with mouldings that recall English late Perpendicular work.

Well-proportioned columns, composed of a cylinder with four shafts disposed round it, are used in the choir of Ghent Cathedral. In the nave and choir of St Sauveur at Bruges the brick columns formed by clusters of shafts with foliaged capitals are of singular grace, as are the piers supporting the central tower and the responds, or half columns at either end of the nave arcade at St Gilles in the same city. Here the brick material is exposed, whereas at the cathedral it has been profusely decorated with gold and colour.

As a rule, the second, or triforium stage of the elevation is as grandly treated in Belgian as in

English great churches. Occasionally we find the mullions of its arcade forming a continuation of those in the clerestory windows, as for instance in such late works as Nôtre Dame at Malines, St Pierre at Louvain and Nôtre Dame des Victoires at Brussels, and when, as is the case at Malines Cathedral and St Gommaire at Lierre, the spandrels of the pier arches are overlaid with tracery, the effect is very rich indeed.

St Germain at Tirlemont and Ste Walburge at Oudenarde have the triforium stage, but relieved only by two wide obtuse-headed openings, in front of which is a gracefully pierced parapet. The nave of Chester Cathedral affords a similar instance of this treatment, which may be taken as an indication of late work. In the Dominican church at Louvain, and in the parish church at Aerschot, the space between the pier arches and the clerestory is entirely unrelieved; but as both these churches were designed under a strong German influence the absence of enrichment here is easily accounted for. St Jacques and St Paul at Antwerp have a narrow frieze in this position, relieved, to a breadth commensurate with the clerestory, by a slightly projecting balcony in front pierced with tracery.

The influence of Germany on the church architecture of Belgium failed, except in a few instances, to produce that type of church in which the clerestory being dispensed with, the nave and aisles are vaulted at the same height.

The cathedral at Paderborn, the minster at Herford, and the Churches of St Mary in the Meadows at Soest, and St Lambert at Münster in Westphalia, and the principal churches at Erfurt, Meissen, Mühlhausen and Zwickau, in Saxony, may be cited as some of the most noble and typical illustrations of what the Germans style the *dreischiffigen* or *hallen kirchen* (three-naved, or hall churches). This mode of construction, which seems to have made its

appearance in late Romanesque times—the nave of St Ludger at Münster is an example—rapidly grew in favour, and continued to remain so during all the epochs of German Pointed.

Ste Croix at Liége and the nave of St Martin at Courtrai are among the few instances of this class of church in Belgium, but the grandest and most imposing was that of the abbey at Lobbes, between Charleroi and Erquelinnes on the line of railway from Brussels to Paris. This religious house, which had escaped the destructive fury of the sixteenth-century iconoclasts, fell a prey to the revolutionary madness of 1793. During the retreat of the French in March of this year, the division of the army of the Sambre and Meuse, commanded by General Charbonnier, set fire to the church and other buildings of the abbey, which were almost entirely destroyed.

The church, commenced in 1568 and completed in 1576, was of astonishing boldness of construction. It was a building without transepts, 200 feet in length by 80 feet in width. The interior was divided into a nave and aisles of equal height, supported by two rows of columns of clustered mouldings rising to a height of 90 feet to the vaulting, which was elliptical in form and adorned with angular compartments. The height and tenuity of these columns were such that the Archduke Albert, entering the church of Lobbes for the first time, exclaimed in astonishment : " This temple will be the monks' tomb " (*hoc templum erit sepulcrum monachorum*).

Teutonic feeling manifests itself in Belgium chiefly in the aisleless apses, with their great length of window opening, of Nôtre Dame des Victoires at Brussels, the Dominican church at Louvain, and above all, in the stupendous one of Nôtre Dame at Huy.

The clerestory was uniformly employed in the great Gothic churches of Belgium, and it is not too much to say that, next to the western tower, it is

the noblest and most striking feature in the architecture of that country.

The practice of combining three lancets under one arch or hood-moulding, is exemplified in the clerestories of Nôtre Dame de Pamèle at Oudenarde and St Martin at Ypres, but the solid spaces that intervene between the lancets and the under side of the comprising arch are not pierced, as in many English examples. In the procession path around the choir of Ste Gudule, and in the aisleless apsidal choir of Nôtre Dame de la Chapelle, at Brussels, are some early thirteenth-century windows more remarkable for their singularity than for their elegance. They are of two round-headed lights, and the head of the window is likewise round-headed, but in order to make room for the large cusped circle, with which all these windows are traceried, it was necessary to place the subdivisions low down, and to give their mullions additional capitals.

In English architecture the circle characterises the Geometrical period of the Middle Pointed style (1270-1320), and the ogee the Curvilinear period of the next fifty years or so, but in Belgium the two forms appear to have been used side by side, even in the latest phases of Gothic, an oscillation that is very puzzling and requires more care in determining dates than any other part of Europe; and although vertical lines present themselves occasionally in the tracery, this principle never overran the Belgian windows, thus causing those in which a verticality does appear to be classed with any work of the period transitionary between Decorated and Perpendicular. In Belgian churches of the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the windows are the most important features. When used in the facades of transepts they are generally of great size and elaborate design, and in the smaller buildings the rest of the work seems often to have been impoverished for the sake of the windows Those

grandly traceried rose windows which are among the chief glories of French architecture are extremely scarce in Belgium, but pleasing examples on a more modest scale may be seen in the cathedral at Ypres (St Martin) at Brussels (Nôtre Dame des Victoires), in the western tower and transepts at Huy, and in the south transept of the church at Dixmude.

Like the Perpendicular of England, the depression of the arch is one of the characteristics of the Flamboyant of Belgium, but the depressed arch of foreign Flamboyant which was contemporary with our Perpendicular is three-centred. This is sometimes, though rarely, found in England. The depressed arch does not enter into ecclesiastical architecture to the same extent in Belgium as with us. It is for the most part confined to doorways and screen-work. Hence, in churches where the wall seems to be suppressed, and the building to consist of nothing but windows and buttresses, one of the characteristics of Flamboyant Gothic, we frequently meet with windows of which, in defiance of all grace and proportion, the head occupies two-thirds of the whole height. Another characteristic of the foreign Flamboyant is the continual crossing of the mouldings, and the complication of members, which seem multiplied for no other purpose but to be woven together in intricate combinations—a mode of decoration very sparingly used in England.

The great fault of the foreign Flamboyant, as compared with the English Perpendicular, is that it depends for its beauty mainly on the exuberance of its ornament. To its magnificent effects in its best days such churches as Louviers, Abbeville, Les Andelys, Lierre and St Jacques at Liége, to take but a few examples, bear testimony, and it must be admitted that the utmost efforts of the English Perpendicular are dry and tame in comparison; in its latter days the Flamboyant of the Continent ran to seed and fell into a state of degeneracy which

English Gothic has escaped. It is remarkable how much the interest of much of the continental Gothic falls off after the middle of the fifteenth century, and how very poor and meagre it becomes when attempted to be worked plain.

In this respect we have the advantage. Our plain Perpendicular is not necessarily a poor style. However simply it may be worked, there is generally something, perhaps not easily described or defined, which connects it with the Gothic of the best period. Even when the piers are plain octagonal shafts with simple shallow capitals, the mouldings of the arches mere chamfers, and the windows square-headed instead of pointed, we still feel that it is Gothic, and that it has not been worked without some thought or care.

It must, however, be observed that in its worst days the tracery of the foreign Flamboyant is beautifully drawn.

In vaulting, the English Gothic has a decided advantage. The Belgians have little to compare with our highly decorated vaults of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, as for instance Exeter and Lichfield, and still less anything resembling the fan tracery of the cloisters at Gloucester or of King's College Chapel, Cambridge. Their roofs, as long as the Gothic style lasted pure, seldom advanced beyond the simplest elements of ribbed quadripartite vaulting. This arose from no ignorance of the effect of enriched ceilings, since there are some beautiful and intricately groined roofs, as in the aisles of the cathedral and the nave of St Michel at Ghent, in the church of St Jacques at Liége, and in the chapel of St Sacrament des Miracles on the north side of the choir of Ste Gudule at Brussels. This poverty in the vaulting has been attributed to the much greater elevation of the foreign churches, supposing that at so great a height an ornamental style of groining would be lost; but the fact is that the cells, more

often than not vaulted in red brick, were left plain for the display of polychromy, of which but few examples now exist. Of late years, however, the plaster with which the filling in of the vault was covered, to serve as a vehicle for the paintings, has been removed and the red brick exposed to view, much to the advantage of the *ensemble* of such interiors as the cathedral at Ghent, St Michel in the same city, St Germain at Tirlemont, St Martin at Liége, and Nôtre Dame de la Chapelle at Brussels. Nowhere in Belgium has roof decoration been prosecuted with such energy as in Germany, and where it has been carried out, it must generally be looked for in the chapels surrounding the procession paths of churches in which the French *chevet* arrangement has been observed. The most profuse and elaborate examples of roof painting exist in the intricately vaulted St Jacques at Liége, a genuine specimen of early sixteenth-century decoration. The simpler roof of the cathedral at Liége is somewhat similarly enriched with most beautiful and delicate scroll-work, whose colours harmonise admirably with the yellow stone of which the vaulting ribs are composed.

With their deep cells—the depth rendered still more conspicuous since the clearance of the plaster from them—these red-brick vaults of the Belgian churches are undoubtedly very grand and imposing from their simplicity, and where, as for instance in St Martin's at Liége, stone of various hues has been used for the pillars and arches, such an exhibition of natural polychromy cannot be sufficiently admired. Ste Waudru at Mons[1] would appear to have been one of the few Belgian churches whose roofs and pillars have escaped plaster and whitewash, so that we have here one instance at least of a *true* mode of decoration, simple, yet at the same time satisfying to the mind and pleasant to the eye.

At Malines the roof of the apse and one of the pillars in the nave of St Rombaut have been denuded of

[1] See Appendix.

their plaster coverings, disclosing red brick and bluish-grey stone respectively. May the day not be far distant when the whole of this magnificently proportioned interior shall stand forth in all its glory of natural colour. The same remarks apply to Antwerp, Lierre, and Louvain, where *badigeon* still holds sway.

The square east end is rarely, if ever, found in large town churches, the apse, with or without the procession path and fringe of chapels, being almost universal.

The aisleless apse is mostly to be found in places neighbouring to the German frontier, but it occurs in the central and western parts of Flanders, where its adoption may have been dictated by considerations of site, or other reasons.

We meet with it, for instance, in St Martin at Ypres, whose choir is one of the earliest and most beautiful examples of native thirteenth-century work, with a strikingly marked Burgundian influence.

Students of the Dijon churches will remember the aisleless apse is a feature common to Nôtre Dame, St Benigne, and St Michel, the three principal churches in that city and capital of a province, which, from its proximity to the frontier of Germany, could hardly fail to catch something of the Teutonic spirit.

There is so striking a resemblance in the choir of St Martin at Ypres to that of Nôtre Dame at Dijon as to inspire the belief that, if not the work of the same architect, the choir of the Flemish church was, to a very large extent, modelled on that of the Burgundian one.

Another early thirteenth-century choir with an aisleless apse is that of Nôtre Dame de la Chapelle at Brussels. Later examples are the Dominican church at Louvain, Nôtre Dame at Huy, the parish church at Aerschot, Nôtre Dame at Courtrai, Nôtre Dame des Victoires at Brussels, and St Jacques at Tournai. In the majority of these east ends the windows are

single ones of great length, generally of two, but in some instances of three, lights. In the apse of St Martin at Courtrai the architect has broken up his wall spaces into two tiers of smaller windows, those in the upper tier ranging with the clerestory of the choir, as at Ratisbon and Marburg. The effect of this is very pleasing, as it affords a relief from the normal arrangement.

At Liége the aisleless apses of the cathedral, St Denys, Ste Croix and St Martin are thoroughly German in conception. That of St Paul at Antwerp, closing the vista of a deep aisleless choir, deserves mention as a similarly planned apse in a part of the country remote from Teutonic influence.

St Jacques, Liége, has an exceptional east end, which may be described as a compromise between the French and German methods. It is not a *chevet*, inasmuch as it has not the circumscribing aisle, while its corona of five low chapels prevents its being considered as a German apse. Altogether its plan is characteristic of its locality, on the borders between France and Germany, mingling the peculiarities of the two countries.

In three of the most interesting First Pointed Belgian choirs — Leau, Dinant, and Oudenarde (Nôtre Dame de Pamèle)—the processional aisle around the apse is unfurnished with chapels ; in fact there is no existing example in the country of a choir built during the first half of the thirteenth century in which the *chevet*, fully developed, can be studied. The earliest is the choir of Tournai cathedral, which was rebuilt on its present grandiose scale after 1270, either by a French architect, or under very strong French influence, but the example thus set was followed in the majority of the great churches which arose on the sites of earlier and more modestly dimensioned ones all over the country during the two succeeding centuries, at Ghent, Malines, Lierre, Louvain and Mons.

The cathedral at Bruges differs much from other Belgian churches in the setting out of its five aspidal chapels. Its architect was employed by the Hanse to build the Hôtel de Ville in that city, and had no doubt visited the other Hanse towns, so that he designed the five chapels on a different plan to anything else to be found in Flanders, and very much on the plan of those encircling the apse of the Dom at Lübeck. The arrangement of these chapels at Bruges has always struck the writer as being peculiar but very grand, whether viewed externally or internally. Each of their three sides is wide enough to admit of a window of five lights, and the tall pyramidal slate roofs, with which these chapels are crowned, impart an air of great amplitude and majesty to a building, which, externally at least, has few other features worthy of admiration.

A large proportion of the churches built in Belgium during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries have chapels on either side of the nave, but few seem to have been designed with double aisles. Among these must be mentioned Nôtre Dame at Antwerp, which has three aisles on either hand. Double aisles are found at Walcourt, in one of the churches at Diest, in Nôtre Dame des Victoires at Brussels, and St Hubert in Luxembourg. At Nôtre Dame, Bruges, the outer aisles were not added until a period greatly subsequent to that of the nave, so that they must be looked upon as the result of accident rather than of design.

Groups of towers are not common in Belgium. When they do occur, it is in churches of the Rhenish Romanesque period, as, for instance, Nôtre Dame at Roermond, and St Servais at Maastricht, two of the noblest of those round-arched churches which were planted along the course of the Meuse. A third group is found in the south-western part of the country, at Tournai. Here the group is composed of a tall slender tower flanking the eastern and western sides of the apsidal transepts, and, at the intersection

of them with the nave and choir, a short but well-proportioned square tower with pinnacles which die into the oblique sides of an octagonal spire. Unfortunately this central tower at Tournai is dwarfed by the lofty Middle Pointed choir, and the transeptal towers are placed rather too close to it to allow of its being seen to advantage, so that the cluster, imposing as it may appear at first sight, can hardly be pronounced a success.

Although for the most part reconstructions of the last century, the steeples at Roermond compose a more pleasing group than those at Tournai.

A typical church of that Rhenish Romanesque style whose parentage may be traced in the Lombardic structures of Bergamo, Cremona, Pavia and Piacenza, Nôtre Dame at Roermond has many features in common with the Apostles' Church at Cologne. We find the apsidal choir flanked by a pair of steeples ; the apsidal transepts ; the central dome-crowned lantern ; the nave with lean-to aisles and clerestory ; and a later addition in the shape of a western transept and ante-nave, in which the round-arched style has been abandoned for the more sparkling contours of the Pointed Gothic.

There are, however, some differences between the two structures. In the Apostles' Church at Cologne the apses of the choir and eastern transepts are semicircular, and a single tower stands in the middle of the façade in advance of the western arms. At Roermond the apses are pentagonal ; three low apsidal chapels project from the central one ; and a tower is placed immediately in front of either western transept, which, as well as the ante-nave (if one may so call it), is of loftier proportions than the older parts.

The western towers have gabled tops, and are furnished with tall slate spires ; the eastern pair is similarly gabled, but the spires are not so lofty ; the lantern at the junction of the nave with the

eastern transepts and choir has also its eight sides gabled, is crowned with a dome, and combines with the steeples at the eastern and western extremities to produce a picturesquely pleasing group.

It has been remarked that these steeples at Roermond are, as regards their upper stages at least, modern, for the exterior of the church was sadly mutilated in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Three of the four towers were pulled down to the roof level, and a clumsy brick tower was erected over the western porch.[1]

The weight of this rendered the west end of the church so unsafe that about fifty years ago it was pulled down and reconstructed under the superintendence of M. Cuypers, from whose designs the old towers were carried up to their original level and crowned with the slated spires we now see.

The central lantern at Roermond is probably a unique example of such a structure erected at so early a date in northern Europe. In plan it is a star, and not an octagon, and is crowned with a dome instead of the more usual pyramidal capping.

The nave—composed of two wide vaulting bays, each subdivided into two lesser ones—is, like the transepts, and choir, rich German Romanesque work ; but the western transepts, with their towers and antenave, are beautiful First Pointed work and rather French in treatment.

Grand triforia are carried round the nave and western transepts, and terminate in the eastern transepts, where they are bracketed out from the walls, and from the floor levels appear as oriel windows, each of the oriels containing its original altar. There are ancient altars in the triforium space under the eastern towers, and the original high

[1] Some idea of the structure in this condition may be derived from a woodcut in the third volume of Schayes' "Histoire de l'Architecture en Belgique," published more than half-a-century ago.

altar still exists in the central of the three low chapels projecting from the apse.

One triplet of round-arched windows lights the clerestory in each of the two great bays into which the nave is divided on either side, an arrangement recalling that in the cathedral at Münster. The interior of the cupola is most elegant, the foliated circle with which each of its sides are pierced being seen through a graceful arcade of two openings.

No less striking is the later western portion of the church.

Lord Leighton considered the western transept which is so often met with in northern Germany, as a violation of every fitness, since it scatters the attention to the right and left at a point where it should be concentrated on the high altar.

With all deference to so high an authority, it must be admitted that the western transept produces an undeniably impressive effect, since it constitutes an internal narthex free from benches, creates an effect of much grandeur and space, and moreover affords great facilities for the egress of large congregations.

As the spectator advances up the nave at Roermond the three apses open gradually upon him, and form a noble and appropriate climax without the effect being destroyed by something less magnificent beyond. But their most pleasing effect is external, where the three pentagonal lines combine gracefully together and form an elegant basement for the central dome.

St Servais at Maastricht was so altered in the fifteenth century that its interest as a Romanesque monument is hardly equal to that of the church just described. Yet it has many fine points, notably the semicircular apse, and the towers which flank the short bays between it and the crossing; the crypt; the nave arcades; and the western façade, all of which belong to the original church.

Of the later additions, perhaps the most beautiful

is the southern portal, of good First Pointed date, rich in sculpture, but somewhat questionably coloured, and the extensive Late Gothic cloister with its elaborate north-western entrance.

Perhaps the most interesting of the early features in St Servais is the western façade, which, internally, forms a narthex divided into two storeys, the lower opening into the nave, and the upper forming a singular hall or chapel with an apse at either end and covered with three domical vaults.

Over this hall rise three towers, all of which having become mutilated or debased are now restored to what was, presumably, their original form.

The flanking towers are of Romanesque architecture and have sloping roofs flattened at the top for the support of turrets which are gabled on each side and terminate in short octagonal spires. The central tower in the Late Gothic style, is octagonal, and is crowned with a spire of fantastic but picturesque outline, towards which an iron balcony, encircling it at about mid height, materially contributes.

The interior of this fine church was renovated by M. Cuypers, of Roermond, nearly seventy years ago, a large amount of colour being introduced. The ribs and shafts throughout the church are not very successfully painted with average diaper patterns, but the chief decoration consists in the paintings by Klesene of Dusseldorf, executed on gold grounds in the German religious style with a slight *soupçon* of Fra Angelico feeling imported. Over the arch of the west transept our Lord is introduced blessing St Peter and St Servais. In the lantern, on a light blue ground, are four figures radiating crossways, the one which points westward being the Virgin and Child, while the three others are all adult representations of our Lord in as many symbolical characters. The semidome of the apse contains The Doom.

To the south of St Servais stands the small late

Middle Pointed Church of St Jean, whose tower and octagonal lantern of that graceful type as seen at Amersfoort, Groningen, and Utrecht, constitutes a pleasing feature in the general views of this old-world capital of Dutch Limbourg.

Nôtre Dame, like St Servais, is in Catholic hands, and is chiefly remarkable for its western tower, or, to speak more strictly, exaggerated façade. Rising high above the roof of the church, it occupies the entire breadth of the building, and has a transversely gabled roof. Circular turrets with pinnacles flank the much narrower north and south ends of this façade, which has no doorway, and is only relieved at the summit by a row of arcades indicating the belfry. The western fronts of Ste Gertrude at Nivelles and of St Denys at Liége are analogous examples of an arrangement which reproduced itself down to a late period of Gothic in the north of Germany. Readers conversant with Lower Saxony will doubtless call to mind the peculiar architectural character conferred by repetitions of the tall turret-flanked façade upon such cities as Brunswick, Goslar, Halberstadt and Magdeburg. Internally, Nôtre Dame at Maastricht exhibits the peculiarity of pseudo-transepts and an apsidal choir of the *chevet* plan, much elevated upon a crypt, and composed of arcade and triforium only, the triforium windows having the effect of a clerestory.

The two central pillars of the middle bay of the apse have the peculiarity of being composed of four shafts with a sort of false capital or carved break at mid height. All the others are circular, and the capitals throughout deserve study. The crypt is spacious, with double aisles to its *chevet*.

Central towers occur at Ghent (St Nicholas and St Jacques), Bruges (St Gilles), Oudenarde (Nôtre Dame de Pamèle), Malines (Ste Catherine) and Messines,[1] but, except the two first named, none are remarkable for height or richness of detail.

[1] See Appendix.

The position ordinarily chosen for the tower in Belgium was the west end of the nave, even in great cruciform churches, where one would look for it at the junction of the four arms.[1]

Exceptions to this rule are Nôtre Dame at Antwerp, and Ste Gudule at Brussels, both of which were planned with a pair of western steeples. At Antwerp the northern steeple—the pride and glory of Brabant—has alone been completed, and, although in some particulars open to criticism, is so gorgeous a specimen of art, and soars so nobly over the buildings of the city, as to extort our admiration and regret that the sister tower was not also completed to compose a façade which then might for certain effects challenge any that the Middle Ages have produced.

The late period at which they were begun, and the enormous scale on which they were projected, was fatal to the completion of almost every one of these great western steeples according to the original designs of their architects. Yet, even in their unfinished state, those of St Rombaut at Malines,[2] St Jacques at Antwerp, St Martin at Ypres, Nôtre Dame at Tongres, St Bavon at Ghent, and Ste Walburge at Oudenarde, cannot fail to elicit our admiration from the grandeur of their outline, due in some cases to that boldness of buttressing which gives them a decided advantage over contemporary works in Germany, where the buttress was but little used for towers at any period.

In some cases the masonry of these towers, which, even in their unfinished state, soar to an enormous height, terminates abruptly, without any capping as

[1] In that part of France bordering on Belgium known as French Flanders, the single western tower is of frequent occurrence. At St Omer we find it in each of the four ancient churches; also at St Quentin and Douai. At Aire-sur-la-Lys is a very remarkable tower in this position. It is Renaissance, but so admirably proportioned that at a distance it may be taken for a work of the palmiest Gothic period. Cambrai Cathedral, destroyed at the Revolution, had a single western tower and crocketed spire of open-work.

[2] See Appendix.

at Malines, where the tower at present has reached 350 feet, and St Jacques, Antwerp; but, it must be admitted, with an effect by no means detrimental to them. In others, as at Oudenarde and Ypres, there is a low pyramidal spire, a cupola, or, in the less ambitiously planned examples, one of those quaintly outlined spires of slate or metal which may have furnished Sir Christopher Wren with ideas for certain of his London city church spires.

It is hard to tell now with how many of these precedents Wren may in some way or other have been acquainted. The less he knew of them, the more wonderful was his affinity in invention and fancy to the architects who produced them.

That these colossal towers of the Low Countries were planned to carry spires of corresponding grandeur there can be little doubt. In several cases the designs, and in one at least the model, have been preserved, as at Malines, Mons, Zerikzee and Louvain, where the front of the great Church of St Pierre was designed on the true German principle of a gigantic western screen surmounted by three spires, of which the side ones were to have reached 430 feet, and the central one the enormous height of 535 feet.

It is not at first sight very apparent why the Belgians should have ceased to indulge in a pursuit they had followed with such zeal, nor why, when they did return to it, they showed less aptitude for it than is to be found in any of the neighbouring countries. This may be partly due to the practical love of liberty which resulted from their connection with Charles V., and from their falling into the power of Philip of Spain, whose iron rule put a stop to any national display. The loss of their commerce, also, in consequence of the discoveries of Columbus and Vasco de Gama, deprived them of the means, even if they had the taste, to continue the lavish expenditure they had hitherto indulged in on objects of architectural magnificence. To this must be added

that the Reformation, although it did not change the outward form of the religion of the people, contributed greatly towards the destruction of that unhesitating faith in an all-powerful and undivided Church, which could do all, and save all, and which consequently led men to lavish their wealth and devote their talents to purposes which were sure of some reward at least in this world, and certain, they thought, of undoubted recompense in the next.

The reader must not assume from these remarks, which apply only to the large and important churches, that Belgium is entirely deficient in completed spires. On the contrary she is as well provided with moderately dimensioned steeples as most countries, but they cannot compete with those of Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire, or with those which adorn the villages of Normandy, where the best and most perfect continental specimens are to be found. Yet the great number of different combinations of outline that are presented to the student by the small town and village churches, during even a very limited tour, will not fail to be most useful in forming his judgment, and may furnish him with suggestions to be acted upon according to a variety of contingencies.[1] Thus, the student who selects Western Flanders as

[1] The following churches have towers and spires of interest to the architectural student:—Langemareq (tower and lead spire), Staden (octagonal tower and crocketed spire) and Cortemark[2] (square tower with low octagonal broached spire); these are passed on the line from Courtrai to Ghent; St Jean, Malines; Boortmeerbeek, between Malines and Louvain (stone spire, broached like a small Northamptonshire example); Ste Gertrude, Louvain (pinnacled tower with crocketed spire of open-work); Ternath, between Brussels and Oudenarde (buttressed tower and short slate spire); Denderleeuw, between Brussels and Ghent (square tower surmounted by an octagon, nicely graduated by small slate broaches, and a slate spire); Rumbeken, between Courtrai and Bruges (lofty tower with pinnacles and crocketed spire, quite English-looking); Ypres (St Jacques); Bruges (St Jacques, St Gilles, and the Jerusalem Church); Tirlemont, between Louvain and Liége (Nôtre Dame du Lac). Some of these steeples will be more fully described in subsequent chapters.

[2] See Appendix.

the ground for his investigations, will derive some useful hints from the brick spires of Nôtre Dame at Bruges, St Nicholas at Furnes, Roulers, Lombardzyde, Boesingen, Beerlaere, Vlamertringen, Elverdingen, and Poperinghe, and the noble towers of Lysseweghe and Damme.

The almost universal employment of a single western tower in Belgium during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries precluded the introduction of that imposing façade which, with its triple portals and central rose window, constitutes one of the chief glories of French architecture. Still, the tower so placed is productive of an impressive effect within when, as is usually the case, the arch opening into it rises to the full height of the nave, and particularly when the aisles, prolonged to the western face of the tower, open into the space beneath it by lesser arches. Generally there is a very fine and large west window, sometimes combined with the doorway beneath a deeply moulded arch, as in English Perpendicular work.

The most pleasing of the Belgian porches and doorways are found either opening out of the aisles of the churches or in the façades of the transepts. At Dinant[1] there is a very charming southern portal belonging to the second half of the thirteenth century. It is chiefly remarkable for the sculpture which fills the arches, each arch having four tabernacles in two rows, so that there are sixteen spaces for statuary, which has either been much mutilated or has disappeared altogether. The tympanum is of singular elegance. It is filled with five arcades, diminishing in width from the centre, each compartment being cusped and surmounted by a straight-sided canopy, and the space between these canopies and the head of the arch richly carved. A statue occupies the central niche, and between the doors a large plain crucifix is placed, with good effect. The outer archway of this portal is most gracefully

[1] See Appendix.

contoured, and in the space formed by it and the surmounting gable are three niches, the central one of which contains a much mutilated group representing the Coronation of the Virgin. The gable has a row of seven crockets on each of its sides.

Another very graceful portal is on the south side of the church at Hal. Its outer arch has no capitals to the piers, the mouldings being continued without interruption to their bases. The inner arch is similarly treated. The sides of the porch have each three tall pedestals ; those on the western side still support effigies of the Three Kings, but the sculpture has disappeared from the opposite ones. Within the tympanum of the inner arch is a niched figure of the Virgin and Child, supported by a pillar between the two square-headed entrance doorways, whose scrollwork of hammered iron is well worth studying.

A smaller but porchless doorway in the same church has the Coronation of the Virgin within the tympanum of its arch, which is fringed with niches for statuary. This, and a doorway of similar dimensions at Dieghem, may be accepted as typical of the grace which Belgian artists of the best Gothic period could throw into works of the kind.

The portals of the churches dedicated to Nôtre Dame at Tongres, Malines, and Brussels (du Sablon), and the enormous but unfinished southern portal of St Pierre at Louvain, are characterised by a delicacy of handling and refinement of feeling which enables them to rank with some of the best French works of their age and class.

Before the close of the fifteenth century, Gothic architecture had begun to show signs of decadence, and men's minds and tastes were ripening for a change.

The change, when it did take place, arose in Italy, where the Pointed Gothic style had never at any time taken so firm a hold as in the northern countries, and was a direct consequence of that outburst of modern civilisation known as the revival of letters.

All the characteristics of the Middle Ages were rapidly thrown off. The strain of old Roman blood in the modern Italian asserted itself, and almost at a bound the arts sprang back into the forms they had displayed fifteen hundred years before.

A few examples of work in which old Gothic tradition was set aside had made their appearance in Belgium during the second quarter of the sixteenth century;[1] but forty years elapsed before the Renaissance of the Classical made itself felt in that country. Churches which had remained unfinished were carried on to completion in the Pointed style; while others, among which may be mentioned the great Dominican Church of St Paul at Antwerp, St Martin at Liége and the five-aisled abbey Church of St Hubert in Luxembourg, were begun and completed, in all essentials, between 1530 and 1570 without betraying any symptoms of the coming change;[2] there is no example in Belgium of a church in which the Pointed and the Classic elements are fused as in St Etienne du Mont and St Eustache at Paris, St Pierre at Auxerre, and the vast Jesuit churches at Cologne and Paderborn.

One of the earliest architects to set aside mediæval tradition in Belgium was Lambert Lombard, whose façade to the Flamboyant north porch of St Jacques, Liége, was completed in or about 1558.

Among his pupils were the brothers Corneille and Franz de Vriendt or Floris. To the former we owe the sumptuous rood-loft in Tournai Cathedral, the spiral tabernacle for the Reserved Sacrament in the choir of St Leonard at Leau, and, in all probability, that splendid inner door-case at the west end of

[1] The altarpiece in the church of Nôtre Dame at Hal, whose known date is 1533, may be mentioned as an instance.

[2] On the south side of the nave of St Martin at Ypres is a large chapel built in 1622 in the Pointed style, which may be adduced as an example of the longevity of Gothic in Belgium. Later still is the Chapel of Nôtre Dame on the south side of the choir of Ste Gudule at Brussels.

St Pierre at Louvain. So great was the influence of Corneille de Vriendt upon the Renaissance in Belgium that, long after his death in 1575, his principal works were imitated. Thus, the Hôtel de Ville at Flessingue, the work of Paul Moreelse (1594), was a reduced copy of de Vriendt's at Antwerp ; while in the rood-screen formerly in the great church at Bois-le-Duc, but now in the museum at South Kensington, the German Conrad of Nuremberg was content to make a servile imitation of that at Tournai.

By the middle of the sixteenth century the cities and towns of Belgium had become well equipped with imposing churches sumptuously fitted with all the *instrumenta* of Catholic worship.

Then came the religious disturbances consequent upon the Spanish oppression and the emigration to England and elsewhere of the most industrious portion of the population, with the result that for nearly forty years no churches of any importance were built in Belgium. Thus, the history of Belgian church architecture is deficient in what might have been a most interesting chapter—*i.e.* one dealing with the art from the period in which the Classical style was struggling into life to that in which its principles had become so firmly established as to have completely extinguished the Gothic.

In 1598, the Spanish Netherlands were ceded by Philip II. as a fief to his daughter Clara Isabella Eugenia on the occasion of her marriage with Albert, Archduke of Austria, the Spanish governor. Under their *règime* the wounds which the country had suffered during the religious wars began to heal. The princely pair exerted themselves in every way to promote the welfare of the provinces under their care ; industry and commerce once more flourished, and the administration of justice was recognised. Their religious zeal, of a pronounced anti-Reformation type, displayed itself in the foundation of new monastic and conventual houses, colleges, and other

Catholic institutions, but at the same time materially contributed to the development of art. Numerous churches in the most gorgeous style of the Renaissance were built and decorated with sumptuous altarpieces and other furniture. The archduke and his wife moreover rendered the country an important service by securing the talents of Rubens, who in 1609 had determined to settle in Italy. They appointed him their court painter, permitting him at the same time to reside in Antwerp, the centre of Flemish art. Thus it was that the Renaissance took a deep root in Belgium, and continued to flourish during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but it was seen at its best during the last two decades of the sixteenth century and the first half of the succeeding one.

The talents of the architects and artists who flourished during this period found their expression in that church furniture which in many instances was required to replace that which had been destroyed in the religious disturbances of 1566. Among the most beautiful works of this period must be named the rood-screens at Tournai, Nieuport [1] and Bruges; the spiral tabernacles for the Reserved Sacrament at Alost, Leau and Nieuport; the choir stalls in St Martin at Ypres, and the churches of Dixmude [1] and Nieuport; the organ-cases in St Jacques at Liége, St Pierre at Louvain,[1] Nôtre Dame at Malines and St Sauveur at Bruges; the screen of various materials between the south aisle of the nave and a large early seventeenth-century Gothic chapel in St Martin at Ypres; and the sumptuous door-cases in St Pierre at Louvain, Ste Dymphe at Gheel, and Nôtre Dame at Hal.

Unfortunately, a great number of the most magnificent churches built in Belgium during the Renaissance period, both early and late, attached as they were to religious houses suppressed at the Revolution, have disappeared; but such examples

[1] See Appendix.

as Ste Walburge at Bruges, the church of the Beguinage at Brussels, St Pierre at Ghent, St Michel at Louvain, Nôtre Dame d'Hanswyck at Malines, and the cathedral at Namur, suffice to show us that, if not models of taste, they are not the tame apings of classicality which are so offensive in other countries.[1] Like the Gothic churches they exhibit characteristics that are unmistakably national, so that on the whole it is perhaps only just to say that in architectural matters Belgium occupied much the same position during the era of Classicism that she had attained to during the Middle Ages.

Generally speaking, the plan adopted by the architects of these churches was the Gothic one of a nave and aisles with a clerestory and an apse, behind which a steeple was sometimes placed, as for instance, Ste Walburge at Bruges, and the churches of the Beguinages at Brussels and Malines ; occasionally, we find transepts terminating apsidally, as in St Michel at Louvain and the cathedral at Namur. The façades are usually very imposing, being composed of two storeys, the lower one answering to the arcades separating the nave from its aisles, and the upper one to the clerestory, and in these elevations different orders of architecture were employed. The interiors of these seventeenth and eighteenth century Belgian churches, with their grandly proportioned columns and arches, and their wealth of

[1] One of the most imposing of these destroyed churches was that of the Abbey of St Martin at Tournai, of which Louis XIV. laid the first stone in 1671. The noble Church of St Pierre at Douai, rebuilt in 1731 from the designs of Michel de Brissy of Brussels, is as regards its plan an exact reproduction of St Martin's at Tournai, and except that the order employed is Ionic instead of Doric, the internal aspect of the two churches must have borne a very striking resemblance. Built as it is, quite on the Gothic model, with a clerestoried nave, transepts, deep apsidal choir and western tower, the general appearance of this great church at Douai, both externally and internally, is quite as imposing as many churches raised during the palmiest epochs of the Gothic style.

magnificently carved woodwork, their altarpieces, and their organ-cases, are of their kind undeniably grand, and although they may err in some respects against the canons of classical taste, must command the admiration and respect of the most enthusiastic mediævalist as monuments of a period succeeding a generation comparatively unfruitful in architectural works on a grand scale.

A description of the civic architecture of Belgium hardly comes within the scope of this volume, yet it would be unpardonable to omit altogether any mention of the town halls—those most interesting monuments of a period when a large and liberal expenditure upon objects calculated to elevate the taste was thought, and properly so, to be of public utility. While the great ecclesiastical edifices of England, France and the Netherlands were alike constructed with the object of filling the mind with those sublime images which belong to the service of religion, the other public buildings, such as the Cloth Hall at Ypres, and the Hôtels de Ville at Bruges, Brussels, Ghent, Louvain, and Oudenarde, were intended to impress the spectator with a feeling of respect for the dignity of the laws, and to associate ideas of splendour with the seat of justice.

The former commercial prosperity of most of these cities justified this display of magnificence in the place where her rich burghers and magistrates arbitrated between contending citizens, and punished the violaters of the public peace. They are monuments, therefore, of those times when the rich and powerful inhabitants of great trading towns were enabled to make displays of wealth and magnificence which might vie with the grandeur of princes ; and, by their collective influence and authority, often to resist that oppression which the feudal lords still exercised. Such monuments belong to the history of civilisation.

CHAPTER II

THE FURNITURE AND DECORATION OF BELGIAN CHURCHES

CHURCH-BUILDING was but a part of the whole wherever the mediæval Christian sought to express his religious convictions. The age was architectural, not only that architectural forms and ideas were prevalent in every kind of art, but because all arts were brought into the service of architecture. It was in their architectural application as ornaments of the church building, or as part of the structure itself, that the allied arts reached their greatest perfection, obtained at the same time their greatest utility, their most refined beauty. Two forms of art stand out in the architecture of the Middle Ages both from the superior technical treatment they received and the masterly manner in which they exhibit Christian ideas. These are sculpture and painting on glass.

The art of painting on glass is exclusively mediæval; it originated, reached its culminating point, and declined during the Middle Ages. It is an art of the north, where the cold damp climate necessitated large windows, that the buildings might be well lighted and warmed by the sun.

Whether the use of painted glass had any effect on the increase in the size of the windows shown in the progress of Gothic architecture is a subject for conjecture, but the mediæval architect never conceived a finer idea than a vast clerestory filled with glass glowing with brilliant colours. No more superb decoration has been invented by human

hands than this ; mosaic and painting pale before its dazzling hues. The architecture was a frame of exquisite workmanship wherein were placed jewels of unsurpassed brilliancy. The painted windows were useful as well as ornamental in affording opportunities for telling sacred stories in a pictorial manner intelligible to all. In the absence of books, and indeed of any general popular knowledge, some means of common instruction was necessary, and there was no better or more effective way of accomplishing this end than by the scenes represented in the windows, and in the sculpture with which the churches were adorned.

Arts which could thus bring home the truths of the Gospels and of the Church to minds that could learn of them in no other way fully merited the wonderful developments they received at the hands of the mediæval glass-painters and sculptors.

The churches were more than mere churches, more than mere places for the display of gorgeous ritual, elaborate ceremonies, and imposing functions. They were the centre of the life of the city, the places of popular resort, the most impressive feature of the town. They were epitomes of the culture and thought of the time.

Here alone were found education and ideas, and here the people came for instruction not only in purely spiritual things, but of the intellect. The churches were in truth mighty Bibles, sources of instruction and light in a time when just such illustrations were needed. It is impossible to study these milestones in the history of humanity without feeling that the light these buildings disseminated was of a wholesome and manly nature. One cannot come from studying them without gaining renewed confidence in the people, and in the religion that produced them, in the faith that gave them being.

Thus the Church taught the truths committed to its care ; thus the Christian was reminded of the

cardinal facts of his religion in all the parts of his church building.

The structure itself, not less than its decoration, made one great whole that was the product of Christian ideas, the outcome of Christian faith, the expression of Christian truth. It may, perhaps, be going too far to point to the great monuments of Christian architecture as evidences of revealed religion, but it is impossible to study these works of art in the light of Christian history and experience without being convinced of the absolutely genuine piety and Christian feeling that called them into being. It is thoroughly in keeping with natural laws that Christianity should have freely expressed itself in architecture, but it is scarcely short of marvellous that it should have done so in so thorough a manner and with such stupendous results. It is one of the chief glories of Gothic architecture as practised in the Middle Ages that it can be studied not alone as the visible expression of a great intellectual movement, but as the typical representative of the most active religious impulse that has animated mankind.

These great monuments of Christian art, whether they be architecture or painting or sculpture, are the common heritage of every Christian. The great mediæval churches do not belong to any one part of the Church, or call it branch, or division, if you will. Built at a time when there was no schism in the Western Church, they clearly express the Western conception of Christianity.

As such, they form fit subjects of study to the believing Christian not less than to the architect and the student.

They are invaluable epitomes of the human mind and the growth of Christian ideas at a time of which we have few other memorials.

At the time these great monuments of the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries were

rising, Christianity was receiving its most complete architectural form, but this was not because it had reached its highest stage of development as a religious system or as a social factor. The era in which this point was reached was, as has been pointed out, an architectural one. The art quality was of unsurpassed refinement, but it was due to the nature of the time, to the especial things which occupied the minds of the people, and other characteristics that formed the distinctive civilisation of the age. Christianity as a religion unquestionably inspired architects, sculptors and painters to put forth their best efforts and eclipse all known ideals ; but it was because art and religion both held a greater share of popular thought in the Middle Ages than at any other time, that Christian architecture of the form and style known as Gothic so thoroughly and completely illustrates Christian ideas.

Taking into consideration the fact that, for a country of its size, Belgium is richer in ecclesiastical monuments than any other European country, it is disappointing to find how very little of the ancient stained glass that must at one time have adorned the large and beautifully traceried windows of her churches has been preserved to us.

The greater part of what exists belongs to the sixteenth century, when the style of composition had undergone a great change, approaching more and more closely to the historical, instead of being, as at its origin, chiefly ornamental.

The principle, however, was still kept in view that this species of decoration depends for effect upon coloured light, and that consequently, it approaches the nearer to perfection in proportion to the brilliancy and intensity of its hues. The technical execution was expressly adapted to this end, for the different colours were not invariably on separate pieces of glass, as was the case in the older mosaic style, but the various parts of the figures were cut out in such

a manner as to suit the outlines and the folds of the drapery, whereby the lead that joined the pieces together did not interfere with the design. The advantage attending this method of uniting the separate parts was, that too many dissimilar tones were not burnt in upon the same piece, whereby the purity and brilliancy of the colours were better preserved and the subject could be formed of any extent.

Towards the close, however, of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth century, the method of what is technically styled *peinture en apprêt* came into vogue in the Netherlands.

This consisted in painting the whole of the subject, with its various masses of colours and their middle tints, upon a single plate of glass, which was afterwards burnt in. Yet, although this seemed to be a very great improvement, it was a process requiring the greatest care and dexterity, and it rarely happened that all the tints were perfect.

In fact, there was an evident falling off in the strength, the harmony, and the durability of the colours ; and the value of such productions as works of art decreased in proportion to the greater expedition devised for the various technical processes. And this was the case, not only with small compositions, but likewise with windows upon a large scale executed at this period ; for instance, in those in the Chapel of Nôtre Dame, on the south side of the choir of Ste Gudule at Brussels, which is extremely rich in painted glass of the latest Gothic period. The great western and transeptal windows, of 1528 and 1557 respectively, in which the subjects spread themselves through the lights, in lieu of being confined by the mullions, are truly superb, but these are as a rule less attentively studied than the remarkable series in the northern Chapel of St Sacrament des Miracles, designed by M. Coxcie and B. Van Orley, and presented in 1546 and 1547 by

various sovereigns and princes whose portraits are introduced into them.

There is no attempt in these windows to imitate oil-paintings, but the artist has adopted that system of glass-painting under which, as in the First Pointed or mosaic system, the most vivid effects of colour that human art was capable of could be reproduced, and in which the necessary lead lines have been made conducive to the effect of the picture instead of detracting from it ; and in which a glass-painting has been designed with the object of and intention of executing it according to a system which afforded the artist very limited means of representation as compared with oil or water-colour painting, and which was incapable at the very best of producing any great atmospheric effect ; and above all, with the intention of effecting the most sudden and decided contrasts of light and shade—since by this means the leads might be most easily concealed from the spectator, and pass unnoticed in the general crispness of the picture. Like fresco paintings, to which they bear a considerable resemblance, these windows in the Chapel of St Sacrament at Ste Gudule, which may be compared with those in the Lady Chapel of Lichfield Cathedral,[1] are simple and

[1] This glass at Lichfield was obtained by the Dean and Chapter in 1802, through the assistance of Sir Brooke Boothby, Bart., who, travelling through the Bishopric of Liége after it was under the dominion of the French, visited the dissolved Abbey of Herckenrode near Liége, which until the Revolution ranked among the richest and most powerful in the Low Countries. Here twenty-five nuns of the Cistercian Order, all of noble extraction, had been in possession of a splendid revenue ; and rebuilding their church in the sixteenth century, had enriched the windows with the choicest productions of the glass-painter's art. When the house was desolated, this glass was stowed away, and upon its coming to the knowledge of Sir Brooke Boothby, he bargained for it, at the price of £200, generously transferring the vast advantage of this purchase, consisting of 340 pieces, each about 22 inches square, to the Dean and Chapter of Lichfield. The short Peace of Amiens afforded an opportunity of safely importing this treasure, which, accounting by the rate

grand, and tell their story fully and unmistakably. There can be no question what sort of pictures these are—they are glass-paintings and nothing else—differing from oil-paintings in their comparative want of atmosphere, and from both oil and fresco paintings in the vivid and intense colouring; yet displaying in their composition and treatment the pains the artist has taken to render them as pictorially perfect as the means afforded.

In each window, the subject is represented as seen under the influence of broad sunshine, consistently with which the most vivid contrasts of light and shade are introduced, producing the utmost crispness of effect, and so artfully concealing the leadwork, whilst the nature of the composition reminds the spectator very forcibly of the means resorted to by the greatest of painters to correct in a fresco-painting an unpleasing degree of flatness—the successive archways introduced by Raffaele in his School of Athens.

The student of mediæval glass-painting who may happen to travel on the line of railway from Antwerp to Maastricht should not omit to halt at Sichem, for, in the central window of the apse of the parish church there, he will find a specimen of early fourteenth-century work extremely valuable on account of its rarity.

The window is one of three lights. In either sidelight is the figure of a saint, one on a dark green background, the other on a background of the most exquisite blue; the central division contains a Crucifixion on a deep red ground, treated con-

at which such glass, taken from suppressed religious houses and desecrated churches on the Continent, has been sold in England, may be estimated at the value of £10,000. Another fine specimen of Flemish glass may be seen in St George's, Hanover Square. This glass, formerly in a religious house near Malines, was placed in St George's nearly ninety years ago, where it fills the large Venetian window above the altar and the eastern window of either aisle. The subject is the Tree of Jesse, but modified to suit its present position.

ventionally, with Gothic mouldings at the base of the Cross. Each of the figures stands in a richly canopied niche, below which there is an arcade, whose carving only is coloured yellow, the remainder being left white. The two side arcades have a background of blue and red diapers, and the central one has a coat-of-arms on a red and amber diaper. The tracery is filled chiefly with well-designed Gothic leafage, amber being the prevailing tone.

To the latter part of the fifteenth century (1475-1500) may be assigned the interesting stained glass which now fills the seven windows at the triforium level in both the transeptal apses of the cathedral at Tournai. Formerly this glass was in the lower part of the windows lighting the chapels around the procession path, where, from the tallness of the openings, it formed only a band of colour.

About eighty years ago—when the restoration of the cathedral was first taken in hand—Monsieur Le Maistre D'Anstaign, a member of the committee, suggested the removal of these fourteen pieces of glass to the positions they now occupy, the size of the subjects, their number, and the equal manner into which they divided themselves, all being favourable to such a distribution. Accordingly this idea was carried out, and its achievement commemorated in a thin folio volume entitled, " Les Vitraux de la Cathédrale de Tournai," M. Deschamps (Vicar-General of the Diocese) and the M. D'Anstaign above mentioned collaborating in the letterpress descriptive of these fourteen windows, which were severally illustrated.

The southern series of windows represents scenes from the early history of the bishopric, in which King Chilperic forms a prominent feature ; while the northern range is devoted to incidents in the re-establishment (*c.* 1146) of Tournai as a separate see, after a union of nearly three hundred years with that of Noyon.

The sixteenth-century stained glass in the apses of the cathedral and St Jacques at Liége is remarkably fine. Other examples, also of a late period, may be looked for in the clerestory of the apse of Ste Gudule, Brussels ; at Hoogstraeten, Lierre,[1] Mons, and Antwerp (St Jacques) ; at Louvain in the southern clerestory of a little truncated red-brick church in the Rue de Bruxelles ; and at Bruges in the nave of the Church of St Sépulchre or Jerusalem.

The division of Belgium into two regions, inhabited by two perfectly distinct races, is brought out in its architecture, but still more strikingly in the arts auxiliary to it, such as sculpture in stone and wood, and casting in metals.

The language, the character, manners and the artistic ideals of these two races differ essentially, the north (Flanders, the province of Antwerp, Limbourg and North Brabant) is the home of the Fleming, pious, laborious, slow, yet energetic, his character showing the influence of his German neighbours.

In the south (Hainault, Namur, Liége and Luxembourg) we find the Walloon, the friend of the Frenchman, whose language he speaks. He is of a more lively race, living under brighter skies, and in a more varied landscape—a race that has the cheerful character of its surroundings, whose sons are gay and light-hearted, graceful dreamers, whose art is founded on the charming caprices of their own imaginations rather than on a patient and inflexible study of nature. Of the two, the Flemings boast a more glorious part in the annals of art, and in painting and sculpture more especially the Flemings have produced greater and more famous masters. But the Walloons have played no inconsiderable part in the same history, and it must be remembered that it was by them, and among them, that art first prospered. It was in the Walloon abbeys such as Lobbes, Vaulsort, Stavelot, St Trond and Nivelles

[1] See Appendix.

that ecclesiastical art was most successfully practised between the tenth and thirteenth centuries. Many of these religious houses were, in fact, academies, where painting, sculpture and casting in metal were systematically taught.

One of the most remarkable works produced during the early part of the twelfth century is the metal font, cast in 1112 by the Dinantais, Lambert Patras, for Hellin, canon of the cathedral at Liége, and now in St Bartholomew's Church there.

The reliefs upon its bowl show great technical advance on work of the previous century, and recall those executed a little later by Niccola Pisano at the outset of his career. Patras' work is characterised by a naïve grace, a sense of beauty remarkable for its rejection of conventional forms, and a perfection of composition truly astonishing when we remember the date of its execution—qualities in fact which proclaim the humble metalworker of Dinant an artist far in advance of his epoch.

Among the most beautiful and sumptuous productions of the goldsmith sculptors are the reliquaries preserved in the cathedral at Tournai and in the churches of Huy, Maastricht, Nivelles and Stavelot.

Reliquaries belong, from the early Romanesque times, to those specially favourite objects of veneration which were decorated with all the splendour and artistic skill which it was possible to bestow upon them. This use also arose in the early days of Christianity from the remains and mementoes, and even the bodies, of the martyrs and saints being taken out of the Catacombs, to be used not only for the consecration of altars, but also for amulets. Such small holders were generally worn on the breast, from which they receive their name, *encolpia*. They were mostly small rectangular caskets, of precious metals, or of common materials, ornamented with the emblems of Our Lord, or with subjects from

Biblical history. Golden *encolpia* of this kind have been found during the excavations undertaken at Rome at different periods.

They also occur, at early periods, in the form of a cross; especially the handsome crosses which even then the bishops were accustomed to wear suspended from golden chains on their breasts, and the use of these reliquary crosses continued to be very general during the Middle Ages.

As time went on, the constantly increasing veneration of relics led to the creation of a number of vessels and holders of the most varied forms and sizes, in the variation of which, fancy, and in the rich decoration of which, the capability of art of the different epochs, found an expression as brilliant as characteristic.

The simplest holders of such relics are the numerously occurring caskets and round boxes of ivory, adorned with ornaments or with reliefs, also caskets of fine kinds of wood, or such as are covered with embroidery or enamels. Besides these we find, even at an early period, relic holders in the shape of cups, chalices, cans, bowls, and even hunting horns, all fashioned out of the costliest materials. In fact, the variety of such receptacles is quite inexhaustible, as the zeal of the faithful in the Middle Ages adapted the handsomest things which skill could suit to the purpose into reliquaries.

If the whole body of a saint, or numerous particles of one or of several bodies, were to be enclosed, the form of a sarcophagus with a gabled roof was taken for that purpose, and this receptacle was furnished as a small architectural work, with all imaginable pomp.

These relic chests were made of wood, covered with gold plates or silver-gilt, the flat surfaces being covered with embossed figures, and ornamented with precious stones, filigree, and enamels, so that the mediæval goldsmith's art devoted every means at its command to these works.

The greatest richness is found in works of the Romanesque period, and so great was the preference for this decorative style that its forms were employed even until the end of the thirteenth century.

During the later Romanesque period, the larger chests were developed into small models of churches, with transepts, clerestories and lean-to aisles. The long sides of these reliquaries were fashioned into a series of arcades, within which figures of the apostles and other saints were placed, either in alto-relievo or as isolated figures. On the gabled ends we usually find figures of Our Lord, the Blessed Virgin, and the saints whose relics are enclosed in the chest, while the surfaces of the roof are enriched with representations in relief out of the New Testament, or drawn from the legends of the saint whose remains are believed to repose within.

In the perfected Gothic period a sharper architectonic treatment of these reliquaries is observable, and imitation of a Gothic church in miniature, even to the most minute detail, is striven after. The flat spaces were still retained for representations in statuary, but as the style progressed painting took the place of sculpture, as exemplified in the *chasse* of Ste Ursula in St John's Hospital at Bruges, whose flat spaces are covered by the masterly miniature paintings of Hans Memling.

One of the most elegant and sumptuous of the metal reliquaries is preserved in the Church of Ste Gertrude at Nivelles. It was made about 1272, from the designs of Jacqueney, a monk of the abbey, by Nicholas Colars of Douai and Jackenon of Nivelles, and is composed of copper and silver-gilt, profusely enriched with precious stones.

It takes the form of a church, with clerestory and lean-to aisles, crossed in the centre by a transept. The gabled roof has a ridge-crest, and its surface is embossed with a number of subjects in high relief. The clerestoried portion of the *chasse* shows a series

of closely set windows, each of two compartments, with a quatrefoil in the head. The lean-to roofs of the aisles are graced with *fleurs de lys* set in diamond-shaped panels, and in the faces of the transepts, which do not extend beyond the aisles, is a trefoil-headed niche surmounted by a straight-sided gable and containing a figure. Above, within the gable of the transept, is a large rose window elaborately traceried. Figures of angels occupy arched and gabled niches along the sides of the aisles, four on either hand of the transept. What may be styled the east and west ends of the structure present a central compartment gabled, and lean-to sides, flanked by octagonal turrets and pinnacles. In the gable is a large rose window, and at one end, within an arch below it, is a figure of the Blessed Virgin holding the Divine Child, and at the other Charlemagne, seated in regal state. The arches within which these figures are placed are trefoiled, and in their jambs a series of miniature figures is introduced, just as we see them in the great stone portals of churches.

Another very beautiful coffer, enshrining the relics of St Remacle, Bishop of Liége from 652 to 662, is preserved in the church at Stavelot, between Spa and Luxembourg. A work, in all probability, of the fourteenth century, it is six feet long, of copper plates, gilt and enamelled, the sides flanked by fourteen canopied niches containing statuettes in silver-gilt of the twelve apostles, a foot high, and rather larger ones of St Remacle and St Lambert. At the ends, under gables, are seated figures of Our Lord, and the Virgin and Child. The gabled roof is divided into eight panels of reliefs in *repoussée* work, containing subjects from the life of Our Lord. The sides, cornices, gables, etc., are enriched with precious stones, among which may be noticed the beryl, opal and turquoise. During the French Revolution this shrine was preserved from destruc-

tion by being placed in a large cask, and sunk in the water of the Amblève.

From the ninth to the twelfth century, sculpture, as might be shown by a mere enumeration of those who practised it, was purely ecclesiastical in character. It was taught and executed in religious houses of the Walloon provinces, and the works that emanated therefrom were nearly all designed for use in worship, and are to be found for the most part in churches of the Romanesque period. Towards the close of the twelfth century architecture adopted a new form; art in its turn emerged from the cloisters and threw off its dogmatic formulæ, retaining nevertheless its religious character, and consecrating its first efforts to religion. Then it was that Christian art attained the most glorious stage of its faith. It turned to the study of nature, and then began its progress to the apogee it reached in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

The development of the communes gave a great impetus to the emancipation of sculpture from ecclesiastical control. The markets, belfries, and town halls which rose on every side afforded a magnificent field for the fancy of those sculptors to whom their decoration was entrusted. Religious architecture, losing something of its grandeur and simplicity from the architectonic point of view, in passing from the Romanesque to the Pointed Gothic assumed a new importance from the sculptural side, and began to rival the monuments of civil architecture in splendour and magnificence.

Throughout the north, those vast prayers in stone, t symbols of the age's ardent faith, the great Gothic churches, soared heavenward, and sculptors had to find, and found with ease apparently, a myriad motives derived from a study of nature for the ornamentation of the several parts of these great poems in stone.

The bas-reliefs on the weather-stained and lichen-

covered grey stones of the Porte Mantille at Tournai are the first memorable creations of Belgian sculpture and have a rude poetry which the magic patina laid on them by time has but enhanced, softening their characteristic harshness and Lombardic extravagance.

As representative works of the Early and Late Gothic schools we may take the southern doorway of St Servais at Maastricht ; the portal of the Virgin on the south side of the Collegiate Church at Huy, the southern portal of Nôtre Dame at Dinant, that of Nôtre Dame at Hal ; a smaller one in the same church ; and one of much elegance at Ste Catherine's, Dieghem.

The school most renowned for the production of the various works of art auxiliary to architecture in the early part of the fourteenth century was that of Tournai. Waagen speaks of it with the utmost enthusiasm, declaring that " in their reproduction of nature, at once faithful and discriminating, the pre-eminence of these artists among contemporary European sculptors was as unquestionable as that of the Van Eycks among painters a little later."

Then there was the Burgundian school, fostered by the marriage of Philip the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, with the Countess Margaret, heiress of Flanders, by which many Flemish artists were attracted to his court from Dinant, Hainault, Flanders and Brabant.

The works of Claus Sluter, to whom we owe that magnificent monument, the Well of Moses at Dijon, and the splendid tomb of Philip the Bold, formerly in the Carthusian Church but now in the museum of the Hôtel de Ville, may not inaptly be compared to those of Donatello. In these works Sluter was assisted by his nephew, Nicholas Van de Werve, and Jacques de la Baerse, a native of Termonde.

Pierre de Becker, whose graceful and charming tomb of Mary of Burgundy in Nôtre Dame at Bruges, and Jacques Jonghelinckx of Antwerp who

executed the companion monument of Charles the Bold by order of Philip II., must be named as two of the most illustrious sculptors produced by Belgium during the declining years of the fifteenth century and the first half of the sixteenth.

A little later and we find Corneille Floris, surnamed De Vriendt, executing such masterpieces of the early Renaissance as the rood-screen in Tournai Cathedral and the gigantic tabernacle in St Leonard at Leau, a most graceful and fascinating work, and admired by all artists as the most perfect production of this particular *genre*.

The sumptuous door-case at the west end of St Pierre at Louvain is in all probability from the same hand.

The talents of Floris were not confined to his native country, for they found their expression in the Mausoleum of Christian II. of Denmark in the cathedral at Roeskilde, and in that of Gustavus Vasa in the cathedral at Upsala. Other celebrated sculptors were Louis van Boghen, and Conrad Meyt whose title to fame rests upon the admirable tomb they executed in the sumptuous Church of Brou ; Alex. Colyns of Mechlin, whose masterpiece is the monument of the Emperor Maximilian in the Church of the Holy Cross at Innsbruck ; Jacques du Brouecq, who carved the rood-loft in Ste Waudru at Mons (unfortunately taken to pieces and distributed in various parts of that church), and who gathered around him a school of young sculptors, among whom was the famous Giovanni da Bologna ; and Taillebert, who executed the figures of the apostles affixed to the columns in the nave of Ypres Cathedral, the stalls in the same church, and probably, from their similarity of design and workmanship, those in the churches of Dixmude and Nieuport.

The seventeenth century witnessed the rise of a long series of artists who gave an important development to wood-carving, as evident in the con-

fessionals, pulpits, organ-cases, and other furniture with which the Belgian churches became so richly endowed at this period. One of the chief exponents in the art was Henri François Verbruggen, whose most generally admired works are the confessionals in St Jacques at Antwerp and the pulpit in Ste Gudule at Brussels.

Those whose ideas of carved pulpits are derived solely from the Jacobean and early Hanoverian examples to be seen in such English churches whose furniture has survived the ravages of time, and the still more destructive inroads of the Gothic mania, can form but a faint conception of the character of the pulpits which are to be seen in the Belgian churches.

Thus, in the Church of Nôtre Dame at Bruges, the *chaire de verité*, as it is beautifully designated, is sustained by the figure of Religion seated upon a terrestrial globe, and holding a Bible open upon her knees, while an angel, kneeling before her, is represented in the act of prayer, a design equally admirable for its artistic beauty and for the fervent spirit of piety by which it is characterised. In another instance, in the Church of St Andrew at Antwerp, the calling of St Peter and St Andrew to become disciples has been selected as the subject of the composition ; and the execution, the work of Van Hoole and Van Gheele, is remarkable for its spirit and fidelity.

The base on which the pulpit rests is formed of a seashore from which project large masses of craggy rock, while the sand is strewed with pebbles and sea-shells. Our Lord, represented by a figure the size of life, is walking upon the beach, being met by St Peter and St Andrew, who have left their fishing boat in obedience to His summons ; and the vessel with its rigging and equipments, fully furnished with all the apparatus of the fisherman, rests near the shore. In the nets, which have been abandoned by

the future disciples, are several fish, newly caught, and yet in the last struggles of expiring existence; and a living crab is sculptured with singular fidelity walking over the net in which the fish are thus enclosed.

Every portion of this wonderful piece of work is equally remarkable for its perfect fidelity to nature and its minute delicacy of execution; and the figures of the Saviour and the apostles possess in an eminent degree the attributes of grace and dignity.

The pulpit in Ste Gudule at Brussels, though scarcely so majestic in its general features as the one just described, has attained a very high celebrity as a splendid specimen of its age and class.

It was executed in 1699, by Henri Verbruggen, for the Jesuits of Louvain, but was presented to the Church of Ste Gudule by the Empress Maria Theresa in 1776. The design represents the Expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradise, driven out on the one hand by an angel bearing a sword of fire, and pursued on the other hand by a grisly skeleton, emblematical of death; while above, the figure of the Virgin, crushing with the cross the Serpent's head, symbolises the redemption of mankind. The balustrade of the staircase by which the pulpit is reached is composed of the trunks of trees, twined together, and surmounted by a variety of birds and animals; but the whole composition, though singular as a specimen of ingenious skill, is hardly remarkable for the good taste of its conception, and is noticeable rather as a monument of the perseverance and talent in execution of the sculptor than as a trophy of his artistic capabilities of design.

In that wave of iconoclasm which swept over Belgium shortly after the middle of the sixteenth century, a great number of the most beautiful altarpieces produced during the palmiest days of religious art in the Netherlands perished.

Still there are sufficient remains, not a few of them in obscure places, to tell us of that passionate fervour and piety with which their carving was instinct, as for instance in St Sauveur at Bruges, Ste Dymphe at Gheel, Ste Waudru at Mons and St Denys at Liége; at Oplinter, Deerlyk, Holbeck and Herenthals.

Not a few of the most beautiful altarpieces were produced during the early Renaissance period, at the head of which stands that in Nôtre Dame at Hal. St Sulpice at Diest, St Leonard at Leau, and the churches of Braine le Comte and Nieuport enshrine some of the most elegant productions of this school.

At the beginning of the seventeenth century Spain and the United Provinces were for a time at peace. Almost all the churches had been stripped of their ornaments during the religious troubles of the preceding one, but the monastic orders had become powerful and richly endowed; while guilds and corporations, eager to show the fervour of their Catholic faith now that the "Monster of Heresy" seemed for ever lulled, vied with each other in restoring to their churches something of their ancient splendour. Here were opportunities without number for painters as well as sculptors and architects. Gothic churches began to be decorated according to the new fashion adopted in Italy. Altarpieces magnified to monuments, sometimes reaching nearly to the full height of the building, gave scope, between their tall Corinthian and Composite columns, for pictures of a size hitherto unknown. Florid no doubt and heavy, and strictly speaking incongruous, when found in a Gothic church, these altarpieces, enriched in some instances by the works of Rubens and Van Dyck, can hardly fail to command our admiration from their grandeur and the sumptuousness of their ornamentation and sculpture. In many respects they are preferable to the stylistically "correct Gothic" works, generally small in scale, tame in treatment, and finicking in

detail, for which in some places they have made way.

Of the mediæval rood-lofts in which Belgium was once so rich only six remain—viz. at Aerschot, Dixmude, Lierre, Louvain, Tessenderloo, and Walcourt.

Not only are these *jubés*[1] all of one period—the latter part of the fifteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth centuries—but they bear a very striking family likeness, and on that account are hardly so historically interesting as the German screens, which, beginning with the Romanesque ones of Maulbronn, Naumburg, and Wechselburg, and going on through the Early and Late Pointed Gothic examples at Gelnhausen, Havelberg, Halberstadt, Magdeburg, Marburg, Meissen and Oberwesel, present a chronological series of these important adjuncts to a great Gothic church, unique in Northern Europe.

Like France, the Low Countries were doubtless much richer in mediæval rood-lofts than they are at present, for during the middle of the eighteenth century a deplorable spirit of modern innovation appears to have arisen among the clergy, chiefly in the capitular bodies, and more injury was then inflicted on the great churches than was caused by the outrages of the Calvinists and Huguenots in the religious *émeutes* of the sixteenth. In some cases an entirely new screen in the rococo style was substituted, in others the ancient screen was replaced by nothing.

As regards their arrangement, the Gothic rood-lofts of Belgium followed those of France, in that the entrance to the choir was placed in the middle with an altar on either side of it, whereas in Germany what is known as the "People's Altar" stood within the central compartment, the choir being entered by lateral doorways.

In Belgium the loft itself is raised upon three, in one instance (at Dixmude) upon five, open

[1] The Flemish name for the rood-loft is *doxaal*.

arcades, which project into the space at the junction of the choir with the nave and transepts, and are returned at either end. The arches are richly foliated and sometimes subfoliated, which gives them an unusually rich appearance, and the space immediately above them is covered with tracery, which, if not always of the highest order, charms us by that lace-like beauty of detail and elaborate finish so frequently met with in Spanish work of the florid period. Over this is generally a series of panels filled with sculptured groups illustrating scenes during and subsequent to the Passion of Our Lord. The three central panels are made to project so as to constitute a " pulpit " from which the epistle and gospel could be sung; also for certain lections, letters of communion, pastorals of bishops, etc., and from it the episcopal benediction was given to the people in the nave. The loft itself was occupied by the singers and instrumentalists, as it generally is in Belgium nowadays, the organ either standing upon it, or being arranged above one of the arches leading into the choir aisles from the transepts.

The ground space beneath the loft forms, so to speak, a ciborium for the altar which stands against the wall on either side the entrance. At Louvain, with the laudable object of affording a less interrupted view of the high altar at the east end of the choir, these side walls have been removed, but the appearance of the screen has not been improved by the process. The screen at Walcourt, which, next to that at Dixmude, is perhaps the most beautiful of the Belgian *jubés*, was removed to the west end of the church, probably during the early part of the last century, but within the last twenty years it has been restored to its proper position, minus, however, the side walls and their abutting altars, so that it is as open as the one at Louvain. The Tessenderloo screen, which was executed immediately after the religious troubles in the Low Countries for the Abbey

of Averbode, was also transferred to the west end of the church, where it still is.

Of Early Renaissance screens the Cathedral at Tournai and the church at Nieuport present beautiful examples. The original rood-loft at Nieuport was doubtless as sumptuous a piece of work as those above alluded to, judging from the entrance doorway and the attached shafts on either side of it. In designing the present loft the old Gothic form was adhered to, with a central projecting ambon, enriched, like the space on either side of it, with sculpture. In this instance the central panel of the ambon has a figure of Our Lord standing, His left hand holding the orb and the right uplifted.

Figures of the apostles fill the six niches on either side, which are concave, and separated by very graceful Composite pillarets. Against the wall on either side the entrance is an altar surmounted by a piece of sculpture in questionable Neo-Classic taste.

One of these altarpieces represents the Trinity. Our Lord is seated, crowned with thorns and holding the reed; inmediately above Him, within clouds, hovers the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove, and surmounting all is the First Person of the Trinity represented by an aged man with outstretched hands.

The other altarpiece represents Our Lady of Seven Dolours. The Virgin is seated, her breasts pierced by seven swords, and over her is a dove within a circle from which rays extend.

It would appear that this early Renaissance screen at Nieuport was erected, together with other furniture of the same period, including a tabernacle for the Reserved Sacrament, to replace that which had been demolished in an outbreak of iconoclasm, much in the same way as our own churches were equipped with stalls, screens and stained glass during the early Stuart period in reparation for what had been destroyed during the reign of Elizabeth.

Other Renaissance screens and lofts still remain at Bruges—though in one instance at least they have been threatened with demolition by ardent supporters of the Gothic movement—in the cathedral and churches of Nôtre Dame, St Jacques, and Ste Anne. In every case the screen supports the organ, which consequently has a very noble appearance.

St Jacques at Antwerp has a very elaborate Renaissance *jubé*, though later and inferior in that beauty of well-considered and appropriate detail which is so pleasing in the one at Nieuport. At Antwerp the screen supports the organ, which is so arranged that it does not interfere with the view beyond.

In none of the great churches built under the influence of the Classical Revival in Belgium during the seventeenth century does the rood-screen appear.

There is something very attractive and wonderful about the Roman Church of that day ; as the *Roman* Church she was then perhaps at her best and greatest. The fearful shock of the Reformation was over, and had left her altogether superior to its attacks ; she had suffered, but she was still powerful.

Great Britain, North Germany, and Scandinavia were indeed gone, but South Germany was still faithful. Bohemia had returned to her ; she was gaining in the New World more than she had lost in the old ; mediævalism was gone, and she had shown that she could do without mediævalism. The age of the Jesuits, of St Ignatius of Loyola, St Aloysius Gonzaga, St Philip Neri and St Charles Borromeo had but recently passed away.

Her ritual was in its prime ; with all the Renaissance errors, the functions of that period must have been superb. Her æsthetic feeling expressed perfectly her grand ideal, the worldly pomp and grandeur of the Church established in boundless wealth and power as an earthly kingdom. Romanesque gave us the Church in veiled glory, spiritual and yet corporeal, as using this life but not abusing

it. Gothic was the gorgeous vision of heavenly beauty, seen darkly in dimmed light through rich screens. In a Renaissance church the tabernacle was conspicuous with gilding, as the throne of the Lord of the kingdoms of the world, which seated Him sumptuously in a house, palatial rather than religious, more imposing than devotional. The service offered there was not of prayer and thanksgiving, with a ritual symbolical but crude ; not with words clear to hear but hard to understand, and ceremonies " so dark that they did confound and darken," but yet of the utmost loveliness that man can devise ; but functions with prayers murmured and inaudible, appealing to the senses by their magnificence and reverent carefulness, and most exact painstaking. Those were indeed the palmy days of pure Romanism.

The side chapels of most of the great Belgian churches are enclosed by marble screens intermixed with perforated brasswork. These are mostly, however, the work of the early part of the seventeenth century, and no doubt replaced the more ancient oak and metal screens that were mutilated or destroyed by the Calvinists in the devastating religious wars of the Low Countries. They are an existing proof that the traditional principles of enclosure and reverence outlived the change of style of architecture ; for, although all these are of Italian design, they are constructed principally on the old arrangement, and are usually surmounted by standards for tapers.

The custom of screening off the side chapels was universal. We find them in Italy at a very early period (as at San Petronio, Bologna), and many very beautiful Pointed examples both in wood and stone exist in Germany, France and England. They are subsequently found of every date and style.

The screen across the Bootmakers' Chapel in the north transept of Bruges Cathedral is of great

antiquity, probably dating from the middle of the fourteenth century. It is executed entirely in oak, beautifully carved, and skilfully framed; in the rails of the doors are bas-reliefs of angels bearing the cognisance of the confraternity of bootmakers, at whose cost the chapel was erected and founded. There are other oak screens in the south transept of the same cathedral of fifteenth-century date, and the choir and lateral chapels are all enclosed by marble screens filled with perforated brasswork. The black-and-white marble screens which enclose the chapels surrounding the choir of Ghent Cathedral are particularly noteworthy as sumptuous works of their age and class; more elegant perhaps is the screen which separates the south aisle of the nave from a large chapel in Ypres Cathedral. Of good Early Renaissance character, it is a charming admixture of marble—black, white and red—alabaster, and copper, the last-named material being used for the balusters, many of which are inscribed with an invocation to some saint, and the armorial bearings of their several donors—a very common custom in Belgium at this epoch.

Among other examples we find these inscriptions on the copper balusters forming the uprights to an oak screen of 1635 in Nôtre Dame at Termonde. Somewhat earlier is a wooden screen in the south aisle of Ste Gertrude at Nivelles. Here, unfortunately, the copper balusters have been replaced by plain iron bars placed diamond-wise. The tracery in the lintel and the pinnacled buttresses in the uprights are quite Flamboyant, but the carved wooden balusters in the base are Renaissance, while the panels below present a fusion of the two styles. In the Church of St Sépulchre at Diest are some seventeenth-century oak screens with balusters of brass whose soft colour contrasts admirably with that of the woodwork.

Surrounding the tabernacle at Leau and St

Jacques, Louvain, are very elegant brass balustrades of mid-sixteenth century date with most rich crestings which are ingeniously worked into candlesticks. Of these tabernacles, or receptacles for the Reserved Sacrament, there are several examples in Belgium both in the Gothic and Renaissance styles, and upon them their artists seem to have lavished more pains than on almost any other article of church decoration. The Gothic tabernacle in St Pierre at Louvain, and the Renaissance one in St Leonard, at Leau, whose spiral canopies rise to an extraordinary height, are perhaps the most remarkable pieces of elaborate architecture ever executed in stone, and have always been looked upon by the Belgians as *chefs-d'œuvre* of art.

On the whole Belgium has been fortunate in the preservation of its Renaissance furniture, more particularly as regards its organ-cases. Works of this date form chapters in the history of a church, and if they be expunged the continuity of its historical records is destroyed.

The position of the organ varies very considerably. In the cathedral, Nôtre Dame, St Jacques and Ste Anne at Bruges, it stands upon the screen dividing the nave from the choir, and as, in each instance, the case is a very fine specimen of wood-carving, the instrument presents a grandiose appearance thus situated.

In St Pierre at Louvain and the cathedral at Ghent, the organ is picturesquely disposed above the arch leading from the north transept into the choir aisle ; at Nôtre Dame, Malines, it is in the same position on the opposite side. These three organ-cases are of particular interest to the student, as, like the superb one at the west end of St Jacques at Liége, they are of an earlier Renaissance type than those at Bruges.

Of organs occupying a gallery at the west end it would be difficult to point to a more sumptuous example than that in the great Classical church of St Michel at Louvain.

The finest series of Gothic choir-stalls are in Ste Gertrude at Louvain, and Ste Catherine at Hoogstraeten; St Sauveur at Bruges, the Dominican church at Louvain, and the parish church of Aerschot also contain Gothic stallwork of considerable merit.

Many of the *instrumenta ecclesiastica* described or alluded to in this chapter are illustrated by photography in a sumptuous work published between 1880 and 1889 in five volumes folio by M. Van Ysendyck, entitled "Documents Classés de l'art dans les Pays Bas, du X^ième au XVIII^ième siècle."

Among the examples, all of which are of the greatest value to the student, are: the brass lecterns, in the form of an eagle and a pelican respectively, at Hal (Nôtre Dame) and Tirlemont (St Germain); the unique stone pulpit at Kempens and the equally unique ones in wood at Nieuport (fifteenth century) and Ypres (Chapel of the Hôpital Civil, sixteenth century); also several of the ornate pulpits of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; the Romanesque stone font at Termonde (resembling those at Lincoln and Winchester) and the later Gothic ones in brass and other metal at Diest, Dixmude, Hal and Ypres, including the handsomely wrought iron cranes for raising their canopies; the cars on which the reliquaries of Ste Waudru at Mons and Ste Gertrude at Nivelles are conveyed in the street processions on certain festivals; a pendent crucifix of great beauty at Oplinter; the gigantic paschal candlestick kept in the procession path at St Leonard, Leau; the chandeliers, sconces, etc., at Aerschot, Bastognes, St Bavon, Ghent; the inner door-cases at Ypres (St Martin) and Louvain (St Pierre); altarpieces, brackets for statuary, details from the Romanesque pillar capitals at Tournai, and the destroyed rood-loft at Mons, doorways, choir and parclose screens, reliquaries, stalls, and tabernacles, descriptions of which, however minute, can give but an inadequate idea.

As all accounts of buildings on the Continent written before the French Revolution are of special interest, the publication, forty years ago, of "The Journal of a Tour through part of Flanders and France in 1773, by James Essex" was welcome.[1]

[1] James Essex, who was born in 1722 at Cambridge, enjoyed much reputation as an architect during the middle of the eighteenth century. In the transformation of older structures which he was instructed to carry out at Cambridge as well as in his original works (except the altarpiece lately removed from King's College Chapel, and that which still exists in Lincoln Cathedral) Essex adopted the Italian style of his day, which he had learnt from his master, Sir James Burroughs; but in reality he was an enthusiastic admirer of the then despised Gothic style, and when very young was employed by Bentham to prepare illustrations for his famous "History and Antiquities of the Conventual Church of Ely," published in 1771. A boyish admiration for King's College Chapel doubtless had great influence over Essex, who has been characterised with truth as the first professional architect whose works displayed a correct taste in imitations of ancient English architecture, though Pugin criticises them as deficient in boldness and spirit of design, and the details are often meagre. In 1757 Essex was consulted by the Dean and Chapter of Ely as to the state of their cathedral, which long neglect had brought into a dangerous condition. His repairs were carried out in a fairly conservative spirit; but, in strange contradiction to his feeling for old work, he recommended the removal of the beautiful Galilee porch as "neither useful nor ornamental." Fortunately he was not allowed to carry out this view, but in 1770 a sad piece of mischief was committed by the removal of the choir stalls from the position which they had occupied in the octagon for over four centuries, to the six Early English bays of the presbytery, where they remained until Sir Gilbert Scott's restoration of 1851. At Lincoln Cathedral, where he carried out sundry repairs between 1761 and 1784, Essex tried to get the choir stalls removed to the Angel Choir, but, happily, without success. Among his works at Lincoln must be mentioned the present altarpiece and bishop's throne; the repaving of the whole church, and the erection of an arch of excellent design to the vestibule formed between the two western towers. To Essex are also due the pinnacles and cresting which still crown the great central tower of the same cathedral. Through the instrumentality of Gough, he contributed several papers to the *Archæologia*. These, if considered with reference to the time at which they were written, must be allowed to possess considerable merit, and show that their writer was the earliest architectural historian in the modern sense of the word. As

The original MS. of the Journal was in possession of Miss Marion Hammond, a lady connected by marriage with the Essex family, and was lent to the editor, Mr W. M. Fawcett of Jesus College, Cambridge (who contributed a highly interesting preface), to print it or not as he thought desirable.

Essex's journey was made in company with his daughter, Millicent, Miss Wade, and the Rev. Michael Tyson, Fellow of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, who also kept a journal, which cannot now be traced. Writing to Gough, the antiquary, 21st October 1773, Mr Tyson says: "Essex and myself returned home delighted with Popery and Popish churches . . . you shall, some time or other, peep into my journal" (Nichols' "Literary Anecdotes," viii. 607).

Among other things, the journal kept by Essex is interesting inasmuch as it gives us some idea of two very fine churches which were destroyed at the French Revolution, the Cathedral of St Donat at Bruges, and the Church of Nôtre Dame at Ghent. Of both these structures Essex gives a pen drawing of a bay of the choir and nave respectively. The latter would appear to have been a structure of some magnitude, with an arcade, a triforium and a clerestory resembling those of Ste Gudule at Brussels. The nave seems to have had seven bays, the choir four and the apse five. The nave piers were round, those in the choir round, with four semicircular ones attached

early as 1756 Essex issued proposals for engraving views, plans and sections of King's College Chapel; in other words he intended to publish a regular architectural history of the building. The scheme of this work, with several of the plates beautifully drawn by his own hand, is among the MS. which, after his death in 1784, passed into the hands of his friend, the Rev. T. Kerrick, Fellow of Magdalene College, and were by him bequeathed to the British Museum. The same collection contains the manuscript, and many of the illustrations, for a history of Gothic or rather of ecclesiastical architecture, on which he was engaged for many years, and which his friends tried in vain to persuade him to publish.

to them, and the capitals were what Essex calls throughout his notes " Corinthian Gothic."

At Bruges he speaks of the ceremonial at High Mass as being " very solemn, and the music extremely good." Ste Walburge's Church in the same city is alluded to as " an ancient building, in which there is nothing remarkable but the pillars, which are all cylindrical, and the capitals have two tiers of leaves in imitation of the Corinthian, and the pillars not much out of proportion ; the arches they support are Pointed." The present Church of Ste Walburge at Bruges is Classical, and bears no resemblance to Essex's description. It was built early in the seventeenth century, and was probably dedicated to Ste Walburge when, on the restoration of religious order after the Revolution, it was made over to the parishioners of Ste Walburge's in place of their former one which had been destroyed. The Church of the Dominicans is also alluded to by Essex, but there is no church in Bruges now answering to his description. In his notes on Nôtre Dame, Lord Orford's offer of 30,000 florins for Michael Angelo's Madonna and Child in the altarpiece at the east end of the outer south aisle is mentioned, while at Ghent he describes the Church of the Recollets, since destroyed, the High Mass there, and a subsequent procession through the cloisters where Benediction was given ; also the Annonciades, Carthusian and Dominican churches, all of which have disappeared from the same city. The church of the Abbey of St Peter remains, and answers fairly to Essex's description of it—it is Corinthian.

At Antwerp he mentions the rood-loft in Nôtre Dame as " supported by a fine arcade with Collums of various coloured marbles, and on one side of the South Transept a fine Organ ; over the rood-loft is a large Crucifix with the figures of St John and St Mary." Essex also alludes to the fact that the loft was occupied by " a fine band of musick " and

mentions Rubens' "Descent from the Cross" as forming the altarpiece to the altar of the Corporation of Fuseliers.

At the time of Essex's visit the same master's "Elevation of the Cross" was in Ste Walburge's. This church has been destroyed since he wrote, also that of the Abbey of St Michel, which is described as cruciform and of the same style as St Jacques, but the pillars shorter; it had a processional aisle and three chapels.

Of the works produced by those founders of the two different schools of paintings which Belgium has had the distinction, at two distinct periods, of producing—the Van Eycks and Rubens, and their pupils and imitators—a fairly representative number is to be found in the churches.[1]

Hubert and Jan Van Eyck, who were painting at the beginning of the fifteenth century, were artists of the very highest rank; with their unrivalled technical skill, their exquisite finish, and the splendour of their colour they produced works which in some respects even surpassed those of any of the Italian painters. Probably no other artist ever lavished time and patient labour quite to the same extent to which Jan Van Eyck did upon some of his works.

These artists must be regarded as the founders of a new school of painting in Flanders, a school in which realism took the place of mysticism, and tradition gave way to knowledge. They introduced also a true feeling for landscape, and landscape backgrounds and minutely rendered landscape foregrounds are among the chief charms of their pictures. They left a large number of pupils and followers who carried on the tradition of their art very faithfully until about the beginning of the sixteenth century.

One of their most apt pupils was the elder Van der Weyden. He occasionally practised a very different

[1] A list of the most interesting and important of these pictures will be found at the end of this volume.

technical method from that usually employed in Flanders—that is to say, he painted in pure tempera colours on unprimed linen, the flesh tints especially being laid on extremely thin, so that the texture of the linen remains unhidden. Other colours, such as a smalto blue used for draperies, are applied in greater body, and the whole is left uncovered by any varnish. The special method used with such success by the Van Eycks and their school was to paint the whole picture carefully in tempera and then to glaze it over in transparent oil colours.

To the school of the Van Eycks belong a number of very talented painters, who inherited much of their marvellous delicacy of finish and richness of colour. The chief of these was Memling (1430-1475), who for harmonious frankness of colour and purity of expression must be put at the head of the old Flemish painters, and whose masterpieces exist at Bruges in the Hospital of St John and in the Academy.

Van der Meire and the younger Van der Weyden, Quintin Matsys and Gheerardt David also produced works of great beauty and extraordinary finish of execution. Though the elder Van der Weyden and other Flemish painters of the time visited Italy, the Italian style of painting appears to have had very little influence on their vigorous works.

At the beginning of the sixteenth century Flemish art began to lose rapidly in vigour, a weaker style being substituted under the influence of Italy, but its progress may be traced, in an uninterrupted course, through the works of Frans Floris, de Vos, the Breughels, Pourbus, the elder and younger, and a number of artists little known in England down to Otto Vennius, Rubens, and his distinguished pupil Van Dyck. The two last-named were the ruling spirits of the second epoch of Flemish art.

The majority of Rubens' works indicate the rich and splendid tone of his imagination. He seems

on all occasions to have abandoned himself almost entirely to his own feelings, and to have been guided exclusively by his own impressions, deriving less assistance perhaps than any other painter from sources out of himself. He is, therefore, eminently original, and if, in all his numerous works, a few instances can be found in which he has copied the ideas of other painters, it is evident how well they have been digested, and how skilfully adapted to the rest of his composition.

His paintings abound in defects as well as beauties ; but they possess the attribute peculiar to the works of true genius, that of commanding attention and enforcing admiration. It is difficult to say which branch of his art Rubens cultivated with most success. In history, portraiture, animals, landscape, or still life, his brilliant imagination and skilful execution are equally apparent. His animals, particularly his lions and horses, are so admirable that it has been said they were never so properly, or at least so poetically, painted as by him. His portraits rank with the best productions of those who made that branch of the art their exclusive study ; and in his landscapes, which combine the lustre of Claude Lorraine with the grandeur of Titian, the picturesque form of his rocks and trees, the deep tones in his shady glades and glooms, the sunshine, the dewy verdure, the airiness and facility of his touch, exhibit a charm and variety of invention which fascinate the observer. In the mechanical part of his art, Sir Joshua Reynolds thought Rubens the greatest master that ever existed. His defects, which are neither few nor unimportant, consist chiefly of inelegance and incorrectness of form, a want of grace in his female figures, of which that buxom one of Salome in the " Descent from the Cross " at Antwerp is an instance. All his subjects, of whatever class, are equally invested with the gay colours of spring. A very general want of sublime

and poetical conception of character may also be discovered in his pictures; and the good taste of the mixture of truth and fiction presented in his famous allegorical pictures has been strongly questioned by some writers. There is, perhaps, no painter whose style has been so much described and questioned as that of Rubens.

The church erected by the Jesuits in Antwerp was almost entirely Rubens' work, and if he did not, as has often been asserted, design the façade, he certainly was the inspirer of the whole building, which, after all, was but a reminiscence of the Genoese churches.

For a century this Church of St Carlo Borromeo at Antwerp remained the only example of its kind in Belgium. Hitherto, no Fleming had undertaken to paint ceilings with foreshortened figures, and blend the religious with the decorative art after the style of those buildings which are met with in Italy, and owe their decoration to masters like Titian, Veronese and Tintoretto. No less than forty ceilings were composed by Rubens and painted under his directions in a space of two years, but all were destroyed by fire in 1718.

Sketches in water-colour were taken before the disaster by De Wit, and from these were made the etchings by Punt which alone enable us to form a judgment of this grandiose undertaking. A general view of the church in all its splendour is preserved in the Madrid Gallery.

As a colourist, Van Dyck deservedly ranks with the first masters: he could imitate to deception the brilliancy of his master, Rubens, by whom he was actively employed on the pictures in the church at Antwerp just alluded to, or assume the rich and mellow hues of Titian. If some of his works are censured for the predominant brown tints, it should be recollected that they were not so originally, but have become dark through the protrusion of the

ground colour, or from being slight and hasty productions. No painter was ever more skilful or dexterous in his art, his rapid execution was governed by a mastery of touch, accompanied by a lightness and spirit peculiar to himself, and which are frequently the distinguishing characteristics between his works and those of Rubens.

In comparison with that illustrious artist, as a historical painter he was immeasurably inferior; not so in portraiture; in this he rises superior, and may almost claim an equality with Titian. If he has less dignity in expression than the great Venetian, he has infinitely more elegance, and grace, as well as natural animation, superadded to chaste and correct drawing, the agreeable art of giving action to his figures, and a more pleasing air to the heads.

These excellences he had acquired by studying the peculiar beauties of the best Italian masters, on which he formed a style entirely his own, and admirably adapted to portray persons of every class and character, which is not the case with the severe and solemn style of Titian.

Pieter Neeffs, born in 1577 or 1578 at Antwerp, was a pupil of Hendrik van Steenwyck the elder, and made the interiors of churches in Antwerp and its neighbourhood a speciality, often introducing candlelight effects into them. His mechanical skill was great, but his hand was heavier than Steenwyck, and his colour less pleasing. The figures in his pictures were painted by Francks, van Thulden, Teniers and Velvet Breughel. His son Pieter painted similar subjects to those of his father, greatly inferior, both in the neatness of the finishing and the correctness of the perspectives.

Unlike the cathedrals and churches throughout France, where the doors stand open from early morn till eve, those of Belgium are invariably closed at

noon. The cathedrals are reopened about two o'clock, when the afternoon offices of none, vespers, and compline are performed, parish churches remaining closed until a later hour.

Circulation in the aisles surrounding the choir is almost invariably unrestricted, except, of course, during the hours of service, and the visitor can roam about at his leisure unchallenged by vergers or showmen.

In some churches there are pictures of exceptional interest, which, except on certain occasions,[1] are kept veiled, and for viewing which a fee is demanded. In the cathedrals of Bruges, Ghent, Liége, Malines, Namur and Tournai, the chapter offices are performed twice daily, the matutinal ones of tierce, canons' mass, and text being sung, generally with organ accompaniment, about nine o'clock. At Tournai and Liége the plainsong at the daily choral Mass is good, and the ritual dignified.

The daily afternoon offices, which usually commence at half-past two are, as a rule, monotoned, without the accompaniment of the organ. In certain important churches, as for instance Ste Gudule at Brussels and Nôtre Dame at Antwerp, there is a daily mass with music of a more ornate character, while in other places a sung mass may usually be heard at an earlier hour of the morning, and Benediction between four and five o'clock in the afternoon, when the melody to the *Verbum supernum prodiens* (The Heavenly Word proceeding forth) is, as often as not, that stately one from the Mechlin Processionale, whose introduction into the services of the Anglo-Catholic Church may be traced to the publication, in 1851, of the " Hymnal Noted."

The Sunday afternoon offices at Liége Cathedral are

[1] As for instance at St Bavon, Ghent, where Van Eyck's famous " Adoration of the Lamb " is disclosed to public view, at the conclusion of the last Mass on Sunday.

very grandly performed, both ritually and musically, and the visitor to that city should make a point of assisting at them.

The contrast between the services in the Belgian churches and the Catholic ones of Germany is very marked. Devout as they are at Antwerp and Bruges, at Ghent and Liége there is little heartiness in the worship. The congregations are, for the most part, dumb ; and the visitor to Belgium for the first time will experience a feeling of disappointment when he finds that the people take no part. One feels as though one would like to give them a good rousing hymn to sing. In Germany, particularly throughout the valley of the Rhine, where it is dominant, and in Westphalia, where it is strong only in certain districts, Catholicism has all the evidences of vigorous and healthy life. In his "Cathedrals and Churches of the Rhine and North Germany" the writer has drawn attention to the great People's Masses at Cologne, Münster, Paderborn, and elsewhere. Such a service, in which the people sing familiar hymns and chorales, while the priest says a Low Mass, is one of the most impressive features in the religious life of Germany, and a better method to inspire devotion and enthusiasm to a marked degree could hardly be devised. One cannot but sympathise with the desire expressed by so many people at home for well-known popular hymns to be sung in our services, even if defective from the point of view of a purist. The education of public taste is very commendable, but it is a heavy price to pay in the alienation of many enthusiastic people, because musically ill educated. Fervour can be developed, as Wesley found, by the magnetic influence of hymns that catch the popular fancy, and the risk of becoming open to the charges even of vulgarity seems to some worth running, if the masses can be roused to love and rally round the Church.

CHAPTER III

TOURNAI, COURTRAI, AND YPRES

THE Cathedral of Tournai is not only the finest, but the most architecturally interesting of all the great Belgian churches.

It lies certainly in the direct line from Calais through St Omer and Lille to Brussels; but most travellers hurrying to the last-named care but little for these intermediate towns, let ancient or modern chroniclers have written what they may to render them interesting, and to arrest the artist or antiquary on his way.

Thus, while the cathedral churches of Malines, Antwerp, Bruges and Ghent are repeatedly visited, and are well known to all tourists, this noble pile at Tournai is comparatively neglected, though possessing many more beautiful and remarkable features than any of them, and presenting in its *tout ensemble* a dignity in which all of them are strikingly deficient.

The superior grandeur of Tournai Cathedral seems to arise not merely from possessing a central tower, but from the magnificent development of its Romanesque nave and apsidal transepts, aided by a Middle Pointed choir of colossal proportions, and the four elegant but singularly placed lateral steeples, which produce an effect to which the central tower by itself would be unequal.

On emerging from the railway station the visitor cannot fail to be struck with the first view of the building which closes the vista of the main street. From here it seems to consist merely of a western

group of five towers and a lofty apsidal choir, since the nave, which is considerably lower than the transepts and choir, is concealed by the houses that environ the church so effectually as to preclude a good general view being gained of it from any point.

Tournai Cathedral occupies rising ground on the south bank of the Canal de l'Escaut, which, still spanned by a bridge of the Pointed epoch, cuts the city into two equal parts, leaving on the right the old Faubourg Saint Brice, formerly the Gallic Durnacum, where was situated the palace of the Frankish kings, and where, in 1653, was discovered the Tomb of Chilperic and its curious treasures of Gallo Romanesque archæology.

There is sufficient evidence to induce the belief that Tournai Cathedral was founded at the end of the third century, and rebuilt towards the close of the fifth, with the aid of Clovis, by St Eleutherius, the third occupant of the see.

Eleutherius was born at Tournai in 456 of Christian parents, named Serenus and Blandia, whom legend, ignoring the interval of a century and a half, calls converts of St Piatus. While he was still a young man a persecution of the Christians arose in Tournai, and the Franks, who were not yet converted, expelled the whole of them from the city. Eleutherius and his family, with many others, settled at Blandinium (presumably Blandain), where a church was built, and one Theodorus consecrated bishop. Upon his death, Eleutherius, having been sent by the Christians to Rome to obtain the sanction of the Pope, was consecrated to the see, most probably in 487. The first nine years of his bishopric were spent at Blandinium, but the conversion of Clovis and his followers enabled Eleutherius to return to Tournai. His episcopate, which lasted forty-five years, seems to have been chiefly passed in struggles with the pagans and heretics. The latter belonged to sects of the Arians, whose doctrines at this time influenced

the greater part of Christian Gaul except the Franks. Eleutherius is said to have paid three visits to Rome ; first on the occasion already mentioned, and twice when bishop during the pontificates of Symmachus and Hormisdas, the two latter journeys being undertaken in connection with his efforts against heresy. These efforts entailed much persecution, and finally, in 531 or 532, his enemies lay in wait for him as he quitted a church, and so maltreated him that he was left for dead. Seven weeks later he died of the injuries received on that occasion, and was buried at Blandinium, whence his remains are said to have been twice translated. They are now preserved in a magnificent Early Gothic shrine on one side of the high altar in the choir of the present cathedral at Tournai.

King Chilperic endowed this cathedral largely, and his original deed of gift *cum sigillis* remained amongst the archives of the chapter until burnt in 1566, but his munificence is recorded in the seven windows of beautiful fifteenth-century stained glass which adorn the southern transept.

Louis le Débonnaire and Charles the Simple were likewise benefactors to the cathedral, but in 882 the Normans ravaged Belgium with fire and sword, and inspired such universal dread that the people, adding to their prayers " from the fury of the Northmen, Good Lord deliver us," fled in all directions. Tournai, rich and important as it then was, did not escape ; the walls and the chief buildings were destroyed, and the inhabitants were forced to abandon the town, to which they do not appear to have returned until the beginning of the tenth century. At the time of this invasion there can be little doubt that the cathedral was pillaged, and partly, if not wholly, demolished, and it is probable that its reconstruction was not attempted until the middle of the eleventh century. All analogy shows that until this period the nave—the earliest existing

portion of the present church—could hardly have been commenced, and that it was probably much later before it was completed.

If analogy, however, were deemed insufficient to remove the ground for controversy respecting the age of this part of the cathedral, it would seem to be destroyed by the discovery, about eighty years ago, of a MS. entitled "Ritus officii divini ecclesiæ Tornac," and dated 1656. This gives a list of the various festivals celebrated in the cathedral, and points out the 9th of May as the anniversary of the dedication of the church in the following words:—"Dedicatio ecclesiæ est festivus dies in populo intra muros. Triplex est cum octavâ et duplex primæ classis," and then: "Videliscet novæ, anno 1066."

Monsieur Lemaistre d'Anstaign, who mentions this MS. in his "Recherches sur l'Histoire de l'Eglise Cathedrale de Nôtre Dame de Tournai, 1842," remarks that doubtless there were more consecrations than one, for example that of the choir, and those after partial restoration; but that this being the first was properly regarded as the most important, and being duly observed, had been handed down to the date of the MS. alluded to.

The existing transepts, and the crossing with its lantern tower, date from the first half of the twelfth century, and towards the end of the succeeding one the present choir was commenced on the site of a much shorter one which may have featured the transepts.

It was doubtless the intention of the chapter to have rebuilt the whole of the cathedral in the same style as the choir, but happily this was never attempted, the only later additions being the western porch, and a large but poor Gothic chapel which was built alongside the north aisle of the nave, whose original walls and windows disappeared in the process.

During the eighteenth century much injury was

done to the building by injudicious endeavours to support the fabric; many openings, especially in the transepts and triforia of the choir, were walled up; windows were despoiled of their tracery; the caps of columns and other details were covered with whitewash; the frescoes which adorned the walls were obliterated; and the original flat wooden roof of the nave was replaced by the present semicircular one groined in the Italian style.

During that outburst of iconoclasm which passed over the Netherlands between the 19th and 26th of August 1566, Tournai Cathedral was despoiled of its mediæval furniture and decorations; and when, in 1794, the French Revolutionary troops overran the country, it was not only stripped of its revenues, but further pillaged and defaced, its sculpture broken, and its painted glass for the most part demolished.

The plan of Tournai Cathedral is what may be termed transverse-triapsal—that is to say, the choir and transepts have apsidal ends. The nave, of nine bays, has an aisle on either side, with a short additional one opening out of its eighth and ninth bays. A porch communicates with the additional aisle in the eighth bay, on either hand, and opening from the sixth and seventh bays on the south side is a square chapel. Another and much later chapel extends along the whole northern side of the nave, but neither of these chapels has an east window, as it adjoins the above-mentioned porch, which has its entrance in a line with the tower flanking the western side of either transept. At the west end of the nave two arches open into a narthex formed beneath a stone gallery, whose floor is on a level with the triforia, and beyond this is a Late Gothic porch, extending the whole width of the façade, which is lighted by a large rose window, and flanked by circular turrets crowned with pinnacles. The nine narrow arches opening into this porch from the square

in front of the church die off into the columns supporting them in a manner which can hardly be pronounced graceful.

The large chapel which has been built along the north side of the nave has quite obscured the original elevation. This, however, may be satisfactorily seen on the south, where it presents three tiers of round-headed windows, the lowest lighting the aisle, the second, the triforium, and the third, the clerestory. Inside the church there is a storey intermediate between the triforium and the clerestory, but this is concealed on the exterior by the lean-to roof which covers the former.

The four towers which flank the transepts are of the most graceful proportions, and as they vary in detail, some of the arcade work with which they are enriched being in the round-arched and some in the Pointed style, it may be concluded that they were built at different times. They are all crowned with quadrangular spires, and beyond these, but at a somewhat less elevation than the transepts, project the apses, which, like the nave, are furnished with three tiers of windows. The whole of this part of the church has a strikingly German character, and was doubtless suggested by such Rhenish examples as the Cologne churches of Sta Maria in Capitolio, and the Holy Apostles, though the work exhibits a great independence of feeling.

Very stately, but shorn of its proper dimensions when viewed from the east by the lofty choir, is the central tower, square, and surmounted by a short but pleasingly proportioned octagonal spire.

The spaces formed by the oblique sides of the spire with the angles of the tower are occupied by slated pinnacles which rise directly from the parapet without the intervention of turrets. Seen over the house-tops from the south-west corner of the great square, this group of five steeples presents an appearance of great grandeur and nobility, and when,

before the present choir was built, another pair of towers flanked the eastern apse, Tournai Cathedral must have borne a considerable resemblance in this respect to Cluny. All these spires are of slate, and terminate in graceful crosses of metalwork.

Belgium does not possess a more grandiose example of complete Gothic than the choir of Tournai Cathedral; yet, according to the temper, the object and the information of different writers it has been most variously described.

In his sumptuous work, "L'Art Gothique,"[1] M. Louis Gonse speaks very disparagingly of it:

"Il faudrait cependant s'expliquer une bonne fois et exprimer sans détours son sentiment au sujet de ce célèbre morceau, qu'on a voulu assimiler aux belles œuvres du XIII. siècle. Construction médiocre, aussi pauvre de style que d'éxecution, elle ne justifie en rien les éloges qui en ont été faits. Elle appartient à l'extrême fin du XIII^me^ siècle, ou au commencement du XIV^me^. Son état précaire a necessité d'ailleurs de nombreuses restaurations, et cette fameuse cage à jour, qu'on donne volontiers en exemple, ne tient debout que grâce à l'adjonction d'enormes tirants de fer qui relient ensemble les sommies des arcs. Les points d'appui ont fléchi de toutes parts, et je ne serais pas étonné d'apprendre un de ces jours qu'il s'est effondré comme un château de cartes.

"Je vois là l'œuvre d'un architecte inexpérimenté, qui ignorait les conditions scientifiques de la structure Gothique, et qui a superficiellement étudié les types picards de son voisinage.[2]

"La Belgique, sauf dans la construction civile, la sculpture et la peinture, ne s'est jamais complètement incorporée à l'idée Gothique. L'architecture re-

[1] Paris, 1890.

[2] The writer here refers to such works as the cathedrals at Amiens and Beauvais, and to the church at St Quentin.

ligieuse de la période ogivale y est restée incomplète dans ses formes et dans ses moyens d'action."

Fergusson, in the first edition of his "Handbook of Gothic Architecture," is almost equally severe, nor does he appear in the later edition of his fascinating book to have changed his opinion of this extraordinary masonic *tour de force*, which, though productive of considerable wonderment among those to whom size rather than elegance of proportion, and well-considered and appropriate detail, make an appeal, is sure to displease the true artist.

Having praised the Romanesque nave and the Transitional transepts, he proceeds to say: "The choir is the least satisfactory part of the whole; for though displaying a certain beauty of proportion, and the most undoubted daring of construction, its effect is frail and weak in the extreme. . . . At the best, the chief merit of this choir is its clever and daring construction."

When it is said that the apex of its external roof is on a level with the top of the central tower, some idea may be gained of the great height of this choir at Tournai. Exclusive of the apse, it is seven bays in length, and, without reckoning the Lady Chapel at the east end, measures 190 feet. Its height to the vault is 111 feet, and its width, exclusive of the shallow chapels which are formed between the buttresses, and roofed with gables running back to the aisle walls, is 100 feet. The apse has five sides, and a corresponding number of shallow chapels open out of the aisle surrounding it; flying buttresses span the lean-to roofs of the aisles, and with the tall windows of the clerestory, which are surmounted by gables, combine to produce an effect of much grandeur.

During the eighteenth century these windows were deprived of their tracery, that which now fills them having been restored about eighty years ago. In the seven-bayed choir the windows are of three lights,

each with a large quatrefoiled circle in the head, but the arrangement of the lights, a narrow one in the centre with a wider one on either side, cannot be pronounced very happy, though in all likelihood it is only a restoration of the original arrangement, for which, it is to be presumed, there was sufficient authority. In the apse, of which, with its grand sweep of flying buttresses and corona of chapels, a much better general view can be obtained than formerly since the demolition of some houses, the clerestory windows are of two lights, with tracery similar to that in the choir.

Entering Tournai Cathedral by one of the beautiful Romanesque portals flanking the transepts, the effect is strikingly grand, the heavy and severe character of the Romanesque nave contrasting remarkably with the Transitional work of the transepts and the fully developed Gothic of the choir.

The nave is of nine bays, and has the singularity of a double triforium as well as a clerestory. The lower arcade and that of the first triforium are of the same height, which is somewhat of a defect, as it causes the principal arcade to appear rather small and insignificant.

The piers supporting the arches which open into the aisles are composed of a cluster of eight shafts arranged round a Greek cross, which forms the core.

The shafts attached to the ends of the cross are cylindrical, while those niched in the angles are octagonal, and more slender. All these shafts are of the local bluish-grey stone, and the sculpture on their capitals, illustrative of the animal and vegetable kingdoms, is strikingly varied and worthy of careful study.

The piers occupy a square of 6 feet on the plan, and are about 11 feet 6 inches high to the springing of the arches, which being of white stone, with square-edged orders, neither moulded nor chamfered, form a striking contrast to the shafts supporting them.

In the triforium proper the piers are octagonal, and have slender octagonal shafts attached to their cardinal sides, which are much shorter than the oblique ones. The latter are left plain.

A triforium of such dimensions as this at Tournai is almost unique in continental Romanesque architecture of the latter part of the eleventh century, and may have served as a model for those spacious *männerchöre* and *tribunes* which form so striking a feature of the churches built half-a-century later in the Rhineland and North-Eastern France.

The second triforium consists of an uninterrupted series of low semicircular arches springing from circular shafts. The clerestory windows are large, round-headed ones, nine on either side, and between each is a pilaster carrying the transverse arches of the eighteenth-century vaulting. Until the substitution of this roof for the original one, which was of wood, and flat, these pilasters had no existence.

The transepts at Tournai, it will be remembered, have apsidal ends, a feature borrowed, in all probability from certain Rhenish churches, and which would appear to have made its influence felt in the north-east of France, as at Noyon and Soissons. The cathedral at Cambrai and the grand collegiate church at Valenciennes, both destroyed in the cataclysm of the French Revolution, had apsidal transepts, and this *plan tréflé*, as it is styled by French archæologists, seems to have been kept up in Flanders as late as the eighteenth century, as exemplified in the vast Neo-Classical church of St Pierre at Douai.

It has been said that the cathedral at Noyon was suggested by Tournai, doubtless on account of their superficial affinities. But the likeness is merely in general aspect, the methods of construction being wholly different. At Tournai the apsidal transepts are vaulted upon transverse arches of great strength, and upon radiating semi-arches, united where they

meet by a ring of voussoirs set horizontally, and at their springing by vaults keyed into their mass, an ingenious arrangement which recalls the vaulting of the *Salle des Capitaines* over the porch of the monastic church at Moissac in Aquitaine.

The combination of these *arcs-doubleaux*, which, in addition to the solidity of their independent structure, are strongly reinforced by the massive circular courses of the walls, is very peculiar, for it dispenses entirely both with auxiliary arches and with abutments. Tournai Cathedral therefore cannot be called the parent of Noyon, for here we find groined vaults, the intersecting arches of which demand the reinforcement of abutments, either concealed or apparent, to sustain the thrust of these vaults over the lateral *arcs-doubleaux*.

These semicircular apses at the ends of the transepts at Tournai have a magnificent effect, and are divided like the nave into four storeys, though of different heights. At the bottom is a series of six, tall, cylindrical columns, 2 feet 8 inches in diameter, and about 24 feet high. Built up of ten courses of stone, and placed at a short distance from the wall of the apse, they support seven narrow semicircular arches, stilted.

Above these arches is another series, corresponding in number, but of course much lower, and likewise opening into an ambulatory. The round windows in the ambulatory formed between these columns and the wall of the apse in either transept are filled with that fifteenth-century stained glass, formerly in the chapels at the east end of the choir, of which some account is given in the second chapter. In both stages the capitals of the columns consist of volutes and of leaves, and their bases have four sculptured leaves, one at each angle of the pedestal. The third storey of the apse presents an unbroken range of attached pillarets supporting a string course, from which spring the ribs of the vaulting, whose cells are almost

entirely occupied by the round-headed windows of the clerestory. The vaults of the apses and the transepts are formed of rubblework under a wooden roof, and are less than two feet in thickness.

On the western side of either transept the most noticeable feature is the third storey of the elevation, which exhibits a colonnade with alternate long and short octagonal shafts. The original twelfth-century work exists on the eastern side in the two upper stages only, the lower portions having been removed to make way for one tall pointed arch when the rebuilding of the choir took place during the second half of the thirteenth century. The central tower, which would seem to have been built at the same time as the transepts—viz. about the middle of the twelfth century—is open to the interior to a considerable height, whereby an effect of much grandeur is produced. The four arches supporting it are all Pointed, though differing in proportions. The western one is the lowest, and with those opening into the transepts, which are somewhat loftier, springs from noble clusters of shafts with short sculptured capitals. It is probable that the arch opening into the predecessor of the present choir was of the same height as those opening into the transepts, since the capitals of the shafts from which it sprang still partly remain. When the new and much more lofty choir was built, this arch, together with a large portion of the eastern side of the lantern, was removed, and the piers lengthened by the addition of other shafts which are carried up to about half the height of the transept arches. From these superimposed shafts rises the arch opening into the choir, but its great elevation causes it to be quite invisible from the west end of the cathedral.

Across the entrance to the choir, and projecting into the space beneath the lantern, stands the Early Renaissance screen, one of Corneille de Vriendt's most graceful conceptions in marble of various

colours, but which certain clerics of narrow ideas, like those at Bois-le-Duc, would have willingly sacrificed, not many years ago, without any feeling of respect for tradition, or the art of their country.

The screen does not support the rood, which hangs from the vault above it, but a large group in bronze by Lecreux, representing St Michael overcoming Satan.

From the similarity it bears to the choir of the cathedral at Beauvais (1240-1250), that of Tournai is in all probability a work of the latter half of the thirteenth century, though it does not appear to have been consecrated till 1338. There is no likelihood of this Belgian church being of an earlier date than the French one, because, if we compare contemporary buildings in the two countries, we find that the French were half-a-century in advance of the Belgians. This may be seen by comparing the choir of Amiens Cathedral and that of Ste Gudule at Brussels, which were contemporary. In one the Pointed style had reached perfection, while in the other it seems quite in a rudimentary stage. The choir of Tournai Cathedral is so far superior in points of detail, if not in construction, to anything else in Belgium that it may be doubted whether, after all, it was not the work of a French architect. There is an entire absence of that heaviness of detail and that clumsiness of construction so apparent in the majority of thirteenth-century Belgian buildings, nor are any of those bungling contrivances by which the mediæval builders of the Netherlands overcame their difficulties to be seen in this church.

At Tournai the arches set down properly on their capitals, and the capitals are set down properly on the shafts or columns, and the whole work seems to have been carefully set out before it was executed, a thing very unusual in the generality of the Early Pointed Gothic churches in Belgium.

The arrangement of the *chevet* is singular; the centre compartment alone opens into a chapel of any depth, the other four compartments are bowed out into shallow apses. The effect of this is to give great space in the procession path; and as this space is available for congregational purposes it is a remarkably good arrangement for High Mass, and other grand ecclesiastical functions, especially where, as is the case at Tournai, there is a very solid *jubé* at the west end of the choir.

With the exception of Beauvais, no more daring exploit in the way of construction was ever attempted in the Middle Ages than the erection of this choir at Tournai: of course it was too daring. The Gothic architects succeeded in supporting a stone vault upon the smallest possible substructure, but they could not succeed in supporting it upon nothing; hence we find that at Beauvais they were obliged to subdivide the arches and add supplementary piers, and at Tournai to enlarge the buttresses and tie up the whole building with iron rods.

It is said that these ties were not added till the time of Louis XIV., but fractures and settlements seem to have taken place even before the work was completed, for in one of the small apses forming the *chevet* a window is about 8 inches larger at the bottom than at the top. No settlements appear to have taken place lately, and the opening of the triforium about eighty years ago, which had been blocked up in the eighteenth century, has had no bad effect upon the stability of the building, while it has greatly enhanced its beauty.

There are several peculiarities in the design of this choir which must be pointed out. In the first place the piers are not arranged like columns, but are placed with their axes at right angles to the choir, like buttresses. Secondly, the triforium, instead of being arranged as a continuous arcade, or a series of arches, equally subdivided, consists of two pointed openings

of two lights each with a smaller opening of one light between them—*i.e.* in the choir itself; in the apse bays the two openings are contiguous, the space being narrower. The central light, besides being much narrower than the other openings, is also lower, and the space above it is pierced by two cusped circles. Thirdly, the clerestory windows, which are very high and lofty, are also singular. They are of three lights, and as the two outer ones are made to coincide with the larger openings of the triforium below, and the centre light with the smaller central opening of the triforium, the centre compartment is much narrower than the one on either side of it.

Outside, the effect of this, as already remarked, is not very satisfactory, but internally the stained glass has been skilfully arranged so as to subdivide the two large lights into three compartments each, and thus the awkward look has to some extent been relieved.

Between 1850 and 1860 this part of the cathedral was carefully restored by M. Lemaistre d'Anstaign, a local architect of eminence, who was one of the judges in that competition for the erection of a church at Lille into which architects of every nationality were cordially invited to enter.

It is an old story now, how Mr Burges, whose designs gained the first prize, was ultimately thrown over, after having been actually received at Lille as the architect. All the drawings of the competitors became the property of the town, and, with these to help him, a distinguished French ecclesiologist, aided by a local architect who was among the unsuccessful competitors, concocted a new design, in which many elements, much watered, both of Mr Burges' and of Mr Street's design,[1] were recognisable, and this was formally accepted.

[1] Mr Street's design gained the second prize, that of M. Lassus, a distinguished French architect, the third.

Under M. d'Anstaign, the profuse whitewash was cleared off, exposing to view the beautiful bluish-grey of the stonework ; the triforium arcades were opened out ; the tracery restored to the clerestory windows, and stained glass by M. Capronnier inserted in them. Subsequently the windows of the aisles and chapels were similarly enriched with work in the medallion style ; and although, from its early date, the colours of this glass are a little crude, the whole is excellent in design, and placed as they are, so close together, these two great series of windows, in which monotony has the good effect of keeping the whole in balance, give the choir the appearance of a stupendous lantern all of coloured glass.

The stalls, bishop's throne, and screens filling the arches not occupied by the stalls, are all unworthy of this noble choir. The whole of the ancient furniture, and nearly all the monuments, were destroyed either in the iconoclastic outbreak of August 1566 or by the French Republicans two hundred and thirty years later. The high altar, brought from the destroyed Church of St Martin, is poor in design, and although of costly materials is hardly dignified enough for its position.

On either side the sanctuary is a superb reliquary of the thirteenth century, and in the sacristy an altar frontal of great interest is preserved. It is embroidered on a white silk ground, with a tree of Jesse : the figures are well executed in high relief, and the effect of the whole, with the stiff conventional arms of the tree encircling the figures, is very striking.

The churches of St Jacques, St Nicholas and St Quentin are interesting examples of Early Pointed work in that bold, if not very refined, style which was in vogue in this part of Belgium during the thirteenth century. The towers of the two first named are very graceful, and combine with those of the cathedral, St Brice and St Piat—two interesting Early Gothic structures sadly disfigured by clumsy

pseudo-Italian additions and alterations—to impart an air of architectural opulence to the city, when viewed from a little distance. St Jacques and St Nicholas are chiefly First Pointed, and have some features in common, the most remarkable being the clerestory, whose lancet windows are set behind a continuous arcade, with an effect which is somewhat Italian.

At St Jacques the clerestory is interrupted by the low transepts, whose roofs gable out here instead of from the nave roof, which is thus carried along without any break to the chancel. This is a little higher than the nave, and its western gable is flanked by circular turrets and pinnacles. With the exception of the chancel, which appears to have been rebuilt in the fourteenth century, with an aisleless apse of German type, St Jacques is in the lancet phase of the First Pointed style, and has a tower at the west end of the nave with open turrets crowned with pinnacles at each angle, and an octagonal storey carrying a well-proportioned spire. A short ante-nave projects westward of the tower, along whose sides the aisles of the nave proper are carried.

The columns supporting the nave arches are tall cylindrical ones with elongated, bell-shaped capitals, boldly foliaged ; single lancets light the aisles, and triplets, surmounted by a circle, the transepts. An arch is thrown across the nave at its junction with the transepts, and above it is a light open arcade, between which and the waggon-shaped roof there is an unoccupied space, the roof being continued above it to the chancel arch without diminution of height. There being no central tower the presence of this arch is not very intelligible ; still, it constitutes a very agreeable feature, and at the same time serves to increase the length of the nave, which, without such a break, would appear rather too short for its height.

St Jacques has undergone a thorough restoration,

and many of its windows are filled with stained glass of the modern school, recalling by its tinctures the work executed by Gibbs for churches built or restored by Butterfield. In the triplet of lancets which lights the face of either transept, the artist has placed large single figures under pinnacled canopies, thereby missing the style, which should preferably have been the mosaic. The stained glass in the transepts of Nôtre Dame at Dijon, which are similar in style and arrangement to those in St Jacques, would have formed good subjects for imitation.

There is good stained glass, likewise modern, in St Quentin, a small but very picturesque church, whose modern Pointed eastern façade—for the church does not orientate—masks a Romanesque nave without aisles, and whose transepts have been singularly enlarged by the introduction at their angles of four small semicircular chapels, which impart a very original character to the ground plan. The Early Pointed work at the crossing and in the choir, which is apsidal, with a circumscribing aisle, is very good, the treatment of the apse, where the clerestory is composed of single lancet windows almost entirely filling the cells of the vault, being particularly deserving of study.

Before leaving Tournai the reader may be reminded, that this city gave birth, on 17th March 1806, to one of the most versatile and accomplished architectural draughtsmen the last century produced. Louis Haghe. Educated as an architect, Haghe soon forsook the practice of his profession for the more congenial work of illustrating ancient buildings, devoting himself principally to those of his native country. His right hand was deformed from his birth, and his works were executed entirely with his left hand. On leaving college he received lessons in water-colour painting from the Chevalier de la Barrière, a French emigrant. Though not a lithographer himself, Barrière set up a lithographic press

at Tournai in conjunction with M. Dervasure, and Haghe was invited to assist. Drawings were made by him for a series of "Vues Pittoresques de la Belgique," prepared by J. B. de Jonghe, the landscape painter, for production at this press, and on the return of De la Barrière to France he helped De Jonghe to carry the work through.

Haghe was then only seventeen. A young Englishman, named Maxwell, who came to study lithography under De la Barrière, but was instructed by Haghe, persuaded the latter to go with him to England. This Haghe did, and thenceforth England was his home.

Becoming acquainted with William Day, the publisher in Gate Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, Haghe entered into a kind of partnership with him, and a series of works was produced by them which raised lithography to perhaps the highest point it ever attained.[1]

Haghe was a first-rate draughtsman, and his facility and ingenuity made his lithographs works of art in themselves, and not mere reproductions of the original paintings. He often visited his native country, and many of the architectural sketches which he brought back were published in lithography in two folio volumes, entitled "Sketches in Belgium and Germany," and soon attained a deservedly wide popularity.

The delicacy, fidelity and fine effect with which these sketches were executed, heightened as they were by the introduction of light tints into his lithography, fully conveyed the interest which they were calculated to excite. A large proportion of these sketches furnished the artist with admirable subjects illustrative of the various ceremonials of

[1] Day and Haghe lithographed the illustrations in the early volumes of the Transactions of The Royal Institute of British Architects, from drawings by Ambrose Poynter and T. Talbot Bury, two able and zealous pioneers in the revival of the true principles of Gothic architecture.

the Roman Catholic religion. Of these, the most striking and effective perhaps are, a procession issuing from the choir beneath the rood-screen in Tournai Cathedral; the office of Benediction at the beautiful Renaissance high altar in the Church of Nôtre Dame at Hal; and the "Deposition of the Host" within the Gothic Tabernacle in St Peter's, Louvain; additional picturesqueness being secured by the artist's selection of the costumes prevalent during the latter part of the sixteenth century for the figures introduced into these pictures.

Haghe was also continually occupied in water-colour painting, and in 1835 was elected a member of the New Society (now the Royal Institute of Painters in Water Colours), and, although he was one of the society's chief supporters in its early years, he did not produce any important work till 1852. At that date he forsook lithography altogether for water-colour painting, and rapidly won for himself as high a place among water-colour painters as he already held among lithographers. He continued to exhibit till his death. For Flemish interiors Haghe naturally had a predilection, one of his best-known works being "The Company of Archers leaving the Church of Lierre after hearing Mass on Saint George's Day," which was exhibited early in the sixties, and subsequently engraved in *The Illustrated London News*. From 1873 to 1884 Haghe was president of the New Society of Painters in Water Colours. Examples of his work may be seen in the Victoria and Albert Museum, South Kensington, and in that at Bethnal Green is a fine series of drawings by him of St Peter's at Rome.

There are two churches at Courtrai, St Martin and Nôtre Dame.[1] The former, interesting to the ecclesiologist as combining the French and German methods of church-building, is a most noble and spacious church, and if its western portion is somewhat deficient in gracefulness and purity of detail,

[1] See Appendix.

forms, if one may so speak, a very solemn and imposing vestibule to the far better and more elegant choir. The style throughout is Middle Pointed in its earlier and later phases, and the plan includes a nave and picturesquely fantastic spire ; transepts, choir and aisles, each ending in an apse. On the north side of the choir is a spacious apsidal chapel, whence the views across the building in every direction are particularly engaging.

The nave, which was in progress between 1390 and 1439, is divided from its aisles by lofty cylindrical columns with narrow capitals and octagonal abaci ; it has no clerestory, and on that account bears a very striking resemblance to some of the interiors in North-Western Germany, notably that of the minster at Essen. The aisles and transepts are vaulted at the same height as that of the nave, simply, but effectively, with four cells, like that in the choir of Canterbury Cathedral. Indeed, the whole of this vaulting at Courtrai has so early a character that a visitor, uninformed as to the date of this part of the church, might not unreasonably assign it to the latter part of the twelfth century. But, as pointed out in the introductory chapter, vaulting in Belgium was almost invariably simpler than ours, down to the extinction of the Gothic style.

In the choir, where the work is earlier and more graceful, the French style asserts itself. There is a low triforium arcade, and a well-proportioned clerestory, both continued round the apse, which has three sides, but no ambulatory. With its two tiers of windows this apse of St Martin at Courtrai recalls those of Ste Elizabeth at Marburg in Hesse, and the Cathedral of Ratisbon in Bavaria.

At Courtrai the windows in the ground storey of the apse are of four lights, while those in the clerestory are of three, all with geometrical tracery of very pleasing design.

Exceedingly graceful are the columns supporting the five arches on either side of the choir and those which open from its northern aisle into a spacious apsidal chapel. Cylindrical, and of the same height as those in the nave, these columns in the choir of St Martin at Courtrai are of slender proportions, and the carving of their capitals, which is undoubtedly the best and most spirited in Belgium, has a singularly retrospective character. Its intermingled crockets and masses of bold foliage make it look much more like work of the latter part of the twelfth century than that of the fourteenth, to which this part of the church must be assigned.

The first two bays on either side of the choir are wider than the remaining three. Within the westernmost bay are modern Gothic stalls with open tracery work to their backs. The other bays are fitted with screens, partly of wood and partly of metal, and of a good Flemish Flamboyant type, harmonising with the stonework of the late Gothic tabernacle, which, lifting its graceful spire beneath the third arch on the north side, was saved, together with the elaborately carved pulpit, from a fire that much damaged the church in 1862.

Until its interior was modernised in the eighteenth century, Nôtre Dame must have been a very favourable specimen of thirteenth-century architecture. It is a short, cruciform church—the nave has only two bays, but an appearance of much greater size is imparted to it by the chapels which have been built out from the north and south sides. On the western gable of the large southern chapel is a bell turret which groups very pleasingly with the flanking steeples of the western façade.

The columns in the apsidal choir, cylinders with four small shafts disposed round them, all with foliaged capitals, the four-light windows in the transepts with their inner plane of tracery, and the two lateral chapels, are the most interesting mediæval

features of this spoilt, but in many respects picturesque, church.

The Chapel of Ste Catherine, called also the Chapelle des Comtes, and built in 1374 as an outwork against the south aisle, is an imposing structure, groined from slender shafts without capitals, and lighted by seven tall windows, four of which serve for the side and three for the apse. They are all filled with modern stained glass, which, like that in the other parts of the church, is of very good character.

The most remarkable features of this chapel are the bas-reliefs of the panels in the trefoiled blank arches which relieve the walls underneath the windows. These bas-reliefs, which represent the Seven Mortal Sins, and are sculptured at the intrados of the archivolts of each of these arcades, present a series of figures and subjects all equally singular and ridiculous ; they are veritable caricatures, some very indelicate, especially with reference to the building in which they are situated. The fourteenth-century wall-paintings in this chapel, representing the counts and countesses of Flanders, were restored about five and forty years ago by M. Van der Platz, who has not only continued the series down to the time of the Emperor Francis II., but has enriched the western wall with a representation of the Last Judgment.

Upon the great treasure possessed by this church, the Elevation of the Cross, one of the most celebrated of Van Dyck's sacred pictures, the writer is unable to offer any remarks, as, shortly before his visit, it had been stolen by the two men Vesfaille and Carlier, who must long ago have regretted their requisitive tendencies. The painting had, however, been recovered, but not reinstated, as it was undergoing necessary repairs at Antwerp.

The first view of Ypres as one approaches it by the railway from Courtrai is most engaging, the gentle

hill over which the quiet old city spreads itself being crowned with an architectural group unequalled in Belgium for grandeur. This group comprises the Cloth Hall and the great cruciform Church of St Martin,[1] which, though close together, are not absolutely parallel, but the combination of the two buildings, with their towers and turrets, and the more distant steeples of St Pierre and St Jacques, is exceedingly fine, and gives a most imposing effect to this *ci-devant* capital of Western Flanders.

The Cloth Hall, or Les Halles, as this great pile of building is called, is perhaps the noblest example of civic architecture in the Low Countries. The main portion is of uniform early Middle Pointed date, and forms an immense and rather irregular parallelogram, enclosing some long and narrow courts. The principal front, towards the great market place, is about 380 feet in length, very uniform in design, but broken in the centre by a fine lofty engaged tower, surmounted by a spire, finishing in an octagonal louvre and flêche.[2] The whole effect of the building is inconceivably grand, leaving behind it, in point of general effect, the Ducal Palace at Venice. In elevation the main building is divided into three stages. The ground stage consists of a succession of openings with square heads, trefoiled ; the next, of a long series of two-light windows with quatrefoils in the head, the openings in which are square, the tracery not being pierced ; and the third stage has again an immense succession of traceried openings alternately glazed and blank.

The whole is surmounted by a lofty traceried parapet corbelled out, and the steep (and original timber) roof has a ridge-crest of stone, of the most delicate character. The front is finished at the angles with immense octangular pinnacles, corbelling

[1] See Appendix.

[2] This great steeple of the Cloth Hall at Ypres furnished Sir Gilbert Scott with the *motif* for the clocktower of the Midland Railway Terminus Hotel.

out at their base from the wall, and the tower, which rises two stages above the ridge of the roof, has also at its angles similar pinnacles.

The general *motif* of the entire front is continued happily in the steeple, the faces of which are occupied with rows of lofty windows of two compartments. From the belfry, and from within another corbelled parapet, springs the spire, which, at first square, becomes, below the tourelle on its summit, an octagon.

The Church of St Martin, whose position with regard to the Cloth Hall will be understood from the illustration, is an assemblage of several periods of architecture, and was constructed on the site of a church founded in 1073 by Comte Robert le Frison.

This structure was removed early in the thirteenth century to give place to one commensurate with the importance and prosperity of the town, the first portion undertaken being the choir and transepts. These were begun in 1221 by Hugues, Provost of the Collegiate Church of St Martin, as recorded in the original inscription placed upon his grave, and preserved by Sanderus in his "Brabantia Sacra." It ran thus: "Hic jacet Hugo, præpositus, fundator hujus chori, anno 1221, qui obiit die Scholasticæ, anno 1232."

In 1254 the first stone of the nave was laid by the Countess Margaret of Constantinople and the Provost of St Martin. Twelve years later it was completed, and in 1270 the solemn consecration of the church took place. During the fourteenth century various alterations were made in the original structure, and in 1434 the western tower was begun from the designs of the architect, Martin Vtenhove of Malines, upon the foundations of one which had been destroyed by fire in the previous year, Victor de Lichtervelde, burgomaster, and Anastasia d'Oulne, Viscountess of Ypres, laying the first stone.

The tower was twenty years in building, and still remains unfinished, but even in this state it may

YPRES.

The Cloth Hall and St. Martin (Pre-War).

YPRES.

The Nave of St. Martin, looking East (Pre-War).

pass for one of the most harmoniously proportioned in the country.

In 1560, on the increase of the hierarchy in the Netherlands by Pope Paul IV., St Martin's was raised to the dignity of a cathedral, but the see was suppressed in 1801, and has not since been re-established.

Of the Pointed Gothic style as practised in Western Flanders during the first half of the thirteenth century the choir of St Martin at Ypres is unquestionably one of the best and most refined examples. Evincing both in plan and detail a decidedly French influence, it is five bays in length, and terminates in an apse of seven sides without aisles or chapels. The former are carried only as far as the first three bays of the choir; the latter, of which there are but two, are placed on the eastern sides of the transepts, extend along the choir aisles for the space of two bays, and like them are finished with apses. This plan was no doubt derived from Champagne, where a large number of churches were designed with an aisleless apse, one or more chapels being placed in the angles formed by the choir with the transepts.

As instances of what may be styled the Champenois plan, the beautiful First Pointed church of St Yved at Braisne, and that of St Michel at Essômes, may be quoted.[1]

The most remarkable feature on the exterior of the choir of St Martin at Ypres, and one that was to some extent adopted in the almost contemporary Church of Nôtre Dame at Oudenarde, is the clerestory, which has a passage-way, formed by the thickness of the wall, in front of the windows. At Ypres the clerestory is lighted by lancet windows of the simplest character, and corresponding to, but detached sufficiently from, these lancets, to admit of a passage, is an open arcade on tall slender shafts spanned by an arch whose vigorous mouldings die

[1] The choir of the church at Lisseweghe, near Bruges, may be cited as another example of the Champenois plan.

off into massive flying buttresses. The accompanying illustration will convey a far better idea than any lengthened description of the treatment of this clerestory, which is exceeding beautiful, is productive of fine effects of light and shade, and unites with the flying buttresses, whose heaviness is redeemed by a continuous piercing of quatrefoils, the richly crocketed pinnacles, the tall graceful lancet windows which light the chapels, and the perforated parapets, in composing as fine a grouping of parts as is to be met with in Northern French examples of the same period.

Between the third and fourth bays of the choir is a very massive circular turret crowned with a parapet in continuation of that above the clerestory. In the ground storey of the choir to the east of this turret, beyond which the aisles do not extend, the windows are lancets arranged in pairs, but singly in the apse. Between these windows and the clerestory, which, except in the apse, is similar to that in the three bays west of the turret, there is a space of unrelieved wall. In the apse the single lancets which light the clerestory are set back to the same depth as the windows in the other part, and have slender shafts to their outer arches.

The northern transept is flanked by turrets terminating in graceful crocketed pinnacles, and the surface of its gable is enriched, somewhat in the German manner, with what for want of a better expression must be termed fenestriform tracery. Below, and comprised within a shallow arch, are four windows of two lights each but filled in with masonry, the organ being placed against this wall.

On the eastern side of this transept the windows are of three lights, with tracery composed of as many plain circles, and the parapet above them, which is carried completely round the transept, is pierced with a continuous series of diamond-shaped openings enclosing trefoils.

The southern transept is a bay longer than the opposite one, and is more advanced in style, the clerestory windows on its eastern side having foliations to the circles which form their tracery.

When Ypres was visited in the summer of 1908 the façade of this transept was undergoing restoration—though one had taken place about fifty years previously—and was too much enveloped in scaffolding to allow of a satisfactory survey being taken of it, but the *ordonnance* of the design, as far as could be made out, is as follows:—

The central portion is flanked by octagonal turrets terminating in tall pinnacles. From the former, flying buttresses are thrown to massive oblong ones at the extremities of the aisles, whose lean-to roofs are disguised by gables, relieved, as to their surface, by richly traceried circles. The gable of the central portion shows a large four-light window, which, as it lights the space between the stone vault and the roof, is not visible from within. Below this is an immense rose window, the only one of any magnitude in this position in Belgium, and between it and the arch of the central portal the wall is relieved with panelling in the shape of a series of rather shallow trefoiled arcades.

Similar arcading covers the wall above, and on either side of the portals at the ends of the aisles. These are similar in design to, though on a smaller scale than, the central portal, but, like it, they have two square-headed doorways beneath a pointed tympanum. The columns carrying the recessed arches of these three portals are small, and stand upon high bases, but the foliaging of their capitals is very good. Between the doorways of the central portal is a statue, which, as well as the sculpture in the tympanum, was too much obscured by the scaffolding to permit the deciphering of its iconography.

On the whole this façade more nearly approaches the French character than any other in Flanders;

but there seemed to be a flatness about the ground storey of the elevation which buttresses between, and gables to, the arches of the three otherwise pleasingly designed doorways would do much to redeem. In the north aisle and in the clerestory on both sides of the nave the windows have curvilinear tracery, but in those of the large brick chapel on the south side a Perpendicular character is very observable. This chapel, or rather series of chapels, was added early in the seventeenth century, and is a remarkable instance of the longevity of the Pointed style in Belgium. It has a separately gabled roof, and being continued to the extreme west end of the aisle gives additional breadth to the church when viewed from this point.

The triple buttresses at the north and south-west angles of the grand tower have sufficient projection to allow of a porch being formed between them. This porch rises to the full height of the western window, which is of six lights, and set above the double doorway within an enclosing arch, in a fashion which, very common in Germany, was frequently followed in the Netherlands during the Later Gothic period.

Immediately on entering by this doorway the visitor has before him one of the most graceful Early Pointed Flemish interiors. The prevailing colour of the stonework is pale grey. On either side of the nave are seven pointed arches, pleasingly contoured, and rising from tall well-proportioned columns with two rows of bold crocket-like ornament in the bells of their capitals. Each column bears the effigy of an apostle, a very common continental arrangement, but particularly in Belgium and Germany, setting forth materially the symbolism of the pillars, as defined by Durandus.

At Ypres these figures are of unusual beauty and interest, the *culs de lampe*, or brackets which support them, being particularly distinguished by the variety

YPRES.

The Clerestory of the Choir of St. Martin (Pre-War).

of their designs and for the finesse of their execution. They were the work of the Yprois Taillebert, who, both in stone and wood, has left in his native town and its neighbourhood incontestible proofs of his activity and talent. To the same artist we owe the figure of the Salvator Mundi in white stone, which, completing the series, occupies a Corinthian tabernacle above an arch placed within that opening from the tower into the nave. These works, as well as the sumptuously carved and canopied choir stalls, also from the hand of Taillebert, belong to the latter part of the sixteenth century, and as specimens of the Renaissance in its earlier phase take a very high place among contemporary productions of their age and class.

The upper parts of the nave—the triforium with its series of six trefoiled arcades to each bay, opening to a continuous passage, and the clerestory—are later than the piers and arches. In some cases the ribs dividing each vaulting compartment into four cells spring from shafts carried down to the octagonal abaci of the pier capitals ; in others, where it was designed to enrich the spandrels of the arches with sculptured figures, they rest upon canopies.

In the aisles the original wall arcading of simple pointed arches on grey stone shafts remains, but flamboyantly traceried windows have been substituted for the thirteenth-century ones. The vaulting shafts of the northern aisle are semi-cylindrical, and correspond in design to the nave columns ; but in the opposite aisle they are arranged in groups of three slender shafts with foliaged capitals. When, early in the seventeenth century, the chapels which flank this aisle were built, the walls and windows were removed, and a most sumptuous screen of black, white and red marble, in the style of the Renaissance, erected within the arches thus formed. The balusters of this screen are of copper, and as, in accordance with a Flemish

custom, they were the gifts of individuals, they are engraved with the armorial bearings of their donors, together with an invocation to a saint.

One of the most beautiful views across the cathedral is to be had from the west end of the north aisle, opposite these chapels. Equally fine are the views up the aisles, through the stilted arches opening from them into the transepts, terminating in the graceful lancet windows which light the ends of the choir aisles and their adjacent chapels.

Architecturally considered, the transepts and choir of Ypres Cathedral surpass the nave, not only in excellence and interest, but in richness of detail, the work of the earlier and later periods of the First Pointed style meeting in them. The capitals of the circular columns are more elongated, and are completely covered with leafage, which, if not of the most refined character, is bold and spirited. The piers and arches of the transepts are contemporary with those of the choir, and the same richly moulded string-course is introduced between them and the triforia. In the choir, which belongs entirely to the first half of the thirteenth century, the lancet reigns throughout, but in the upper parts of the transepts the style is much more developed. For instance, the triforium in each of the three bays of the former presents six lancet openings on rather tall slender detached shafts, and arranged in pairs; while in the south transept the corresponding space above the pier arches is occupied by three arcades, each subdivided into two trefoiled compartments, the space between them and the containing arch being filled by a quatrefoil. In the northern arm the triforium is similar in design to that of the nave.

The three bays on either side of the choir are occupied by the stalls. They have high backs, and canopies supported by Composite pillars, and were executed by Taillebert towards the close of the sixteenth century. The bishop's throne, uniform

in style, but distinguished by a more deeply projecting canopy, and by the mitre carved in the panelling at the back, adjoins the southern range at the east end, as in our cathedrals. This is a remarkable deviation from continental usage, which places the throne on the north or gospel side of the sanctuary, and quite detached from the stalls of the cathedral body.

Modern statues of the evangelists now occupy the formerly vacant niches above the columns of the three arcades containing the stalls, and smaller figures have been inserted between each compartment at the triforium stage of the apse, which is most gracefully groined, with a filling in of red brick. The seven lancets in the clerestory have modern stained glass, each window containing a canopied figure, but in the lowest stage five of the lancets have been blocked up by an immense Classical altarpiece. There is some very good and brilliant stained glass in the mosaic style in the lancet windows of the chapels on either side of the choir aisles, into which they open by two arches springing from a very slender column. The Early Pointed work of these chapels merits especial study, and like the rest of the choir evinces a very strong French influence allied with some local peculiarities.

A portion of the north transept is occupied by the organ, whose huge pseudo-Gothic case, raised upon a loft of equally poor design, has apparently remained unaltered since John Coney—our English Piranesi—made the drawing of St Martin's for his "Architectural Beauties of Continental Europe" eighty years ago.

Occupying a corresponding position in the opposite transept is a beautiful example of sixteenth-century Flemish Gothic wood-carving in the shape of a door-case, remarkable not only for the delicacy with which the "linen pattern" of its numerous oblong panels has been executed, but for the clever-

ness with which its designer has broken the horizontality of the composition by placing the gracefully canopied statues on the uprights at the angles and between the two central valves at different levels.

Other points worthy of note in this charming church are the roofs, which are groined with small grey stones ; the four great arches opening from the crossing into the nave, choir and transepts ; the exuberantly carved pulpit ; and the cloisters, which should be visited in order to gain some idea of the magnificent flying buttresses to the clerestory of the nave and north transept.

St Martin's possesses a picture by Jean Thomas, a native of Ypres and pupil of Rubens. The subject is the Virgin presenting the Holy Child to Canon François de Mamez, who is attended by six choristers, in the interior of the church. The picture is not only of some value as being the production of one whose works are rare in Belgium—the greater number being at Vienna, where he established himself—but interesting because it shows the interior of St Martin's as it appeared in 1645. At that time it possessed a rood-loft adorned with a series of figures of the apostles, due, it would appear, to Carel van Ypres, one of the favourite pupils of Tintoretto, but whose real name was De Foort. This screen must have been taken down before 1830, as in the drawing by Coney, before alluded to, only an iron railing with gates is shown.

In front of the high altar, a flat stone bearing a plain Latin cross, and the date 1638, marks the resting place of the famous Cornelius Jansen, seventh bishop of Ypres, whose five theses on the necessity of divine grace in accordance with the tenets of St Augustine[1] were condemned by a bull of Alexander VII. in 1656, at the instigation of the

[1] Published posthumously in the "Augustinus, seu Doctrina S. Aug. de Hum. Naturæ Sanitate, Ægritudine, Medecina, adversus Pelagianos et Masselienses." 4 vols.

Jesuits, as heretical. The adherents of the bishop refused to recognise this bull, thus *de facto* separating themselves from the Church of Rome. The sect was formerly not uncommon in France and Brabant, but was suppressed in the former country by a bull of Clement XI. in 1713, termed *Unigenitus*, to which the French government gave effect. The Dutch branch of the sect, however, continued to adhere to their peculiar doctrines. After various disputes with the court of Rome, a provincial synod was held at Utrecht in 1763 with a view to effect a compromise.

According to the resolutions of that assembly the "Old Roman Catholics" (*Roomsche Katholyken der oude Klerezy*), as the Jansenists style themselves, do not desire to renounce their allegiance to the Pope and the Church of Rome.

But (1) they reject the constitution of Alexander VII. of 1656, on the ground that the five theses which it condemns are not truly to be found in the writings of Jansen as alleged. (2) They repudiate the bull *Unigenitus*, and appeal from it to a general council, and they adhere to the Augustine doctrine and its strict code of morality. (3) They insist on the right of chapters of cathedrals to elect their own bishops, and the right of bishops to consecrate other bishops, without the confirmation of the Pope, as required by Gregory VII. At the present day the principal seat of the Jansenists (a name, however, which they disclaim) is at Utrecht, which is the see of their archbishop, and comprises three parishes in that city and sixteen in other towns and villages of Holland.

The other two ancient churches of Ypres — St Pierre and St Jacques—are for the most part uninteresting architecturally, but their towers are fine. The former has corbelled polygonal turrets at the angles of its tower, and a good Romanesque western door, with, immediately above it, a walled-up arch

surmounted by a triplet of round-arched windows in the same style, all very much restored.

St Jacques, built almost entirely of brick, has a nave and choir under one long line of roof, terminating in a five-sided apse, and wide square-ended aisles separately gabled. There is no clerestory. To judge from the apse, and the arcades separating the nave and chancel from the aisles, one would assign these portions to the thirteenth century.

The apse, with its five tall lancets spanned by round-headed arches, which die off against well-gathered up buttresses, resembles that of the cathedral. At the east end of the south aisle is a large window of five lights, all of which, together with the tracery, of good Geometrical character, have been filled in with red brick. The corresponding window in the north aisle, with the exception of some fragments of its mullions, has been completely gutted and rudely walled up with the same material.

The five lancets in the apse are likewise blocked; indeed the church generally appears to have suffered much through that ignorance of, and indifference to, mediævalism which prevailed all over Europe during the eighteenth century, the interior having been miserably Italianised. The windows lighting the aisles are mere pointed openings, quite destitute of tracery, but those in the eastern parts have three orders of shafts with foliaged capitals, pleasingly moulded in brick, by means of which the poverty of their appearance is to some extent relieved.

The most satisfactory part of St Jacques is the tower, whose extreme simplicity and admirable proportion give it a grandeur which is often wanting in much richer structures.

As far as the spring of the six-light west window, which, like that of the cathedral, is linked with the obtusely headed double doorway by a well-moulded arch, the material of this tower is stone; all above is of brick. There are angle-buttresses, but neither

pinnacles nor enriched parapets, the whole being finished with a low octagonal spire. The highest or belfry stage, upon the disposition of whose windows so much of the "expression" of a tower depends that they may not inappropriately be called its eyes, has on each face three rather tall but shallow recesses with tracery in their pointed heads, and a transom crossing each at mid-height. The stage immediately below is similarly treated, and on the whole the tower is reminiscent of those Pointed Gothic ones that are encountered on entering Germany by Westphalia.

CHAPTER IV

BRUGES AND GHENT

THREE old cities far apart, across the breadth of a continent, enable us to form a fair judgment of what the whole of Europe may have been in the palmy days of the Middle Ages. They are Bruges, Nuremberg and Verona. Each tells its own tale, each is marked with the impress of national peculiarity, and each is remarkable among other things, the one as a city of brickwork, the next as that of stone, and the last as that of marble. In Bruges, brick was almost exclusively used; in Nuremberg, stone was used with an excellence seldom rivalled; whilst in Verona, though brick was handled with consummate skill, the great aim of its architects was ever to introduce the marbles in which the surrounding district is so rich.

Each of these cities deserves a full and ample study, and in one respect, moreover, two of them may well teach us a lesson. Nuremberg and Bruges were to the world in the Middle Ages what London, Liverpool and Manchester are to the world in this age; the very centres of all commerce for all Europe. There was in these two old cities a great appreciation of the value of religious ordinances, and a readiness to provide places for their due celebration, so vast and spacious, and so crowded together as it seems to us, that there never could have been a real difficulty in finding some home for the feet of the weary, how poor and miserable soever they might be!

And Bruges, although she has long since fallen from that splendour to which she attained at the commencement of the fifteenth century, when the

BRUGES

THE PALAIS DU FRANC AND BELFRY OF THE CATHEDRAL

From a water-colour painting by A. Forestier

dukes of Burgundy fixed their court here, still shows this very grandly. Approaching it through the flat, pastoral Flemish landscape the traveller finds himself in the presence of a group of towers and spires, which, rearing their diverse forms above the houses, convey a wonderful impression, vivid but dreamlike, and recalling one of those lovely cities with which Memling and his contemporary painters so often delight our eyes.

It must be confessed, however, that the brickwork of Bruges is very inferior to that of other districts in which this material had, from their geological character, to be used. It is generally coarsely done, and there is but little attempted in the way of tracery, and that little is never very effective. One sees nothing, for instance, at all comparable to such brickwork as that met with at Verona, Mantua and Cremona ; at Toulouse, in the great churches of the Cordeliers, the Jacobins, St Nicholas, and Nôtre Dame du Taur ; or in the Baltic cities of Prenzlau, Stralsund and Tangermündĕ. One of the most important facts to be learnt from the Bruges churches is, that brick is not only good outside, but just as much inside, a church, and this may be proved by a visit to St Gilles, where, the whitewash having been entirely removed from the clustered shafts forming the responds or half piers at the extremities of the nave arcade, and from those supporting the arches of the central tower, we are enabled to see what charming tnings may really be done, and done well and naturally, in brick.

If the examples of the several periods of architecture afforded by the Bruges churches are not the best of their kind, they are sufficient, from the diversity of the epochs they mark, the character they bear, and the furniture with which their spacious interiors are, for the most part, so splendidly equipped, to illustrate the Gothic style and the Renaissance of Italian art.

When, in 1559, Bruges was constituted a bishop's see, the episcopal throne was set up in the Church of St Donat. This structure, which was completely demolished during the French revolutionary occupation of Belgium at the close of the eighteenth century, stood on a site now planted with trees opposite the Hôtel de Ville, and from some sketches of interior details given by James Essex in his "Journal of a Tour through part of Flanders and France, made in 1773" appears to have been designed in that bold First Pointed style which prevailed in the country at the junction of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. A drawing of the exterior, preserved in one of the smaller rooms of the Hôtel de Ville, shows St Donat to have been a cruciform structure with very short transepts and a low central tower surmounted by a pyramidal roof and louvred belfry.

In 1865, some five hundred of the sketches made at different times by Augustus Welby Pugin were photographed by Mr Stephen Ayling, and published in two volumes now much prized by collectors. Among other sketches of Bruges in this collection is one of the old Cathedral of St Donat, taken apparently by the great Gothic revivalist from the picture in question.[1]

[1] All who have known anything of the interior history of the ecclesiological movement must have heard of, or must have seen, the unique and vast collection of sketches which Pugin was for years upon years piling up for his own edification. They were neither drawings with the finished *abandon* of penmanship with which Street subsequently revolutionised pen-and-ink architectural sketching, nor yet mnemonic scratches such as Petit rejoiced in before he took to his colour-box; but they were an infinite collection, gathered up together alike at home and abroad, of scraps of memoranda, of picturesque groups of old-world buildings, of finished details, of plans of metalwork and woodwork, testifying alike to the eye, to the perspective, to the thirst after detail, to the cupidity and to the industry of the draughtsman. The thanks of ecclesiologists were therefore justly due to Mr E. W. Pugin for providing, and to Mr Ayling for photographing, these five hundred selected sketches of Pugin. Of

When the Belgian hierarchy was restored after its suppression during the French revolutionary epoch, the Concordat of 1801 did not recognise the see of Bruges, but on its re-establishment about thirty years later the church selected to contain the episcopal throne was that of St Sauveur, whose cruciform plan and spacious dimensions fully entitled it to that distinction.

St Sauveur, which is mainly a work of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, is remarkable for the shortness of its nave. This may be accounted for by the fact that when this part of the church was rebuilt, it was thought desirable to retain the Romanesque western tower as a relic of the earlier building.

Formerly, the tower terminated, at the height of the north and south-east buttresses, in a louvred belfry and one of those transversely gabled roofs so frequently seen in Normandy. Unfortunately this picturesque feature—a memento of which is preserved in one of the sketches by Pugin just alluded

course the drawings were differently adapted to this method of reproduction, and in many of them the reducing process is painfully apparent. Still the expense of an unreduced series would probably have deterred any publisher from undertaking a work which with just notions might have been unsaleable from its bulk and cost. What we desiderate in these volumes is a really explanatory and descriptive letterpress, in lieu of which nothing better is provided than a catalogue of the photographs, neither clearly arranged, nor very accurately printed. For instance, it is not much use telling us that one very singular and dreamily picturesque interior is the church at Servan, without some information of where Servan is, and of the ecclesiastical dignity which that church possessed. No. 61 is noted as an "interior view of the cathedral at Bonn restored." Now the minster at Bonn is a late Romanesque pile, just tending in some details to the Earliest Pointed; while this design is a fully developed Pointed structure. The fact is that the minster at Bonn is notable for an open crypt under the choir, and that Pugin, struck with the architectural capabilities of the arrangement, developed the idea in the style of a more advanced age, superadding a gorgeous open rood-loft, and many other details which quite overlay any possible similarity to Bonn.

to—was burnt in 1839, and a few years later the old character of the tower was entirely altered by the addition of the present heavy Romanesque turrets and pinnacles from the designs of Chantrell, the architect of Leeds parish church and several others built in the north of England during the infancy of the Gothic revival.

Exteriorly, St Sauveur, which is built almost entirely of brick, is a structure of considerable dignity, and comprises a western tower, a nave of four bays, transepts, with a chapel on the eastern side of each, and a choir of four bays terminating in a five-sided apse.

There is a lofty clerestory throughout the building, and the aisles, which are unusually spacious, are continued round the apse, where they communicate with five very large, semi-hexagonal chapels, each lighted by three windows of five compartments and covered with a high pitched roof of slate. Viewed from the east, this group of chapels confers an appearance of amplitude and dignity upon the cathedral which would be materially enhanced by the restoration of the flying buttresses to the clerestory of the choir and its apse.

The interior, most imposing from its great height and spaciousness, is not only extremely rich in furniture of every description, both Gothic and Renaissance, but contains numerous pictures by native artists, a list of some of the most interesting and important of which will be found at the end of this volume.

The well-moulded arches, both in nave and choir, rise from graceful clusters of slender shafts, as do those at the crossing; but in the latest portion of the church, the ambulatory behind the apse, the arcades separating it from the chapels are of the Antwerp and Louvain type, the arch mouldings being carried down the columns without the intervention of capitals.

The reconstruction of the Romanesque church

BRUGES.

The Baptistry of Notre Dame.

began during the second half of the thirteenth century with the choir, whose columns and arches are perhaps the best and most refined works of their period in Flanders, the foliaged ornament in the capitals to the groups of shafts which compose the piers being at once bold and delicate.[1] The triforium is lofty, the shafts to the narrow lancet arches have capitals, and the walls behind are pierced in their upper part with small trefoiled circles, glazed, as at Tournai. In the apse, the clerestory windows are of three lights, while those in the choir are of four. All these windows have very good geometrical tracery, and in the modern stained glass with which they are filled uniformity has had the good result of keeping the whole in balance.

The stalls which occupy the first two bays of the choir are admirable specimens of early fifteenth-century workmanship. There are fourteen stalls, and thirteen sub-stalls on either side, the latter being as usual without desks. The upper stalls have no canopies, but their high backs are enriched with flowing Decorated tracery inserted between two arches, one being round and the other obtuse headed. Each panel corresponding with a stall is divided from the other by a slender buttress surmounted by a crocketed pinnacle, and the under sides of the seats in both rows exhibit, when turned up, a great variety of carved subjects.

On 30th April 1478 the thirteenth chapter of the Order of the Golden Fleece, which was founded in 1429 at Bruges by Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy and the Netherlands, on the occasion of his marriage with Isabella, daughter of John I. of Portugal, was held in this church. It was for this occasion that the original backs to the stalls were heightened, but hardly improved, by the addition of a corresponding number of oblong panels surmounted by a moulded cornice only relieved at the interval of a pair of

[1] Illustrated on p. 82.

panels by a little foliaged ornament in which an Early Renaissance feeling is discernible. In 1727 the twenty-eight coats-of-arms of the Knights of the Golden Fleece were painted on these panels.

On the south side the first two stalls counting from the east have within recent years been concealed by the bishop's throne which, in the generality of the continental cathedrals whose mediæval arrangements have been disturbed, is found on the north or epistle side of the sanctuary, quite unconnected with the stalls of the capitular body. This recurrence to ancient usage at Bruges is therefore worthy of remark.[1]

The sumptuous screen of variously coloured marble which separates the choir from the rest of the church was erected between 1679 and 1682 from the designs of Cornelius Ver Hoeve. It is slightly raised above the floor of the crossing and towards the nave presents three round arches, between which are Composite columns of the most graceful proportions.

The colossal figure of the First Person of the Trinity which interrupts the archivolt in the centre of the balustrade, is from the chisel of the younger Quellin. Upon this screen stands the organ, in a finely carved case of about 1640, presenting with the figures of angels on its central and flanking towers a most noble appearance. There are no pipes on the front facing the choir, as the instrument stood over

[1] In Germany, mediæval custom placed the bishop's throne at the west end of the choir between the two doors with which the rood-screens in that country were universally pierced. When, at the Reformation, a large number of the North German churches passed into the hands of the Lutherans, the old choral arrangements were left undisturbed, and at the present day the bishop's throne may be seen occupying its old place in the cathedrals at Halberstadt, Havelberg, Lübeck, Magdeburg, and Naumburg. On the other hand, at Breslau, Cologne, Münster, Osnabrück and Paderborn, where the cathedrals remained in the possession of the Catholics, the old screens have been destroyed, and the bishops' thrones set up on the epistle side of the sanctuary

BRUGES.

The Choir of the Cathedral, looking West.

the stalls until its removal to its present position in the eighteenth century.

Devoutly is it to be wished that neither of these stately specimens of Renaissance art will ever be banished on the plea that they "intercept the view eastward" or do not "harmonise with the architecture of the church." Works of this age and class form chapters in the history of a building, and if they be expunged the continuity of the historical records is destroyed.

The charming view of the choir—with its sumptuous stalls, brass lecterns, chandeliers and other furniture—gained through the grilles and gates which fill the three arches on the inner face of the screen, should be especially noted by lovers of the picturesque.

Superior in some respects to the great choir screen is the Renaissance portal occupying the third bay, next to the stalls on either hand. In the northern of these portals, where marble, alabaster, oak and copper have been so happily placed in juxtaposition as to produce an *ensemble* of singular harmoniousness, it is interesting to observe how the architect has succeeded in imparting grace to his composition by interrupting the architrave and establishing the archivolt within it. Here the order used is the Composite. In the opposite portal, where the columns are Ionic, the design is more academic; the archivolt does not break into the architrave, but it is at the expense of elegance and refinement of proportion.

The five eastern chapels are the latest portion of the cathedral. They were in progress between 1482 and 1527, and are remarkable for their size, each division of their three-sided apses being wide enough to contain a window of five lights with varied tracery.

The remaining two sides of each chapel are left open, so that the columns which separate them from the ambulatory stand isolated. By this arrangement, which is as picturesque as it is unique,

the whole series of chapels, with their sumptuous furniture, paintings and stained glass, can, from certain points, be included in one view.

In the nave and transepts the proportions of the arcades, triforia and clerestories coincide with those of the choir, but although later by half-a-century, little or no advance in style is perceptible, the capitals of the grouped shafts composing the columns of the nave arcade, whose full beauty is only to be appreciated from the aisles, being of the simplest stiff-leaf kind.

An immense window of the true Late Flemish Gothic type occupies the principal front of either transept, the twelve lights of which it is composed being divided into groups of six by two plain arches springing from a massive mullion. The tracery is of a very vigorous geometrical character, and the mullions are intercepted at mid-height by a transom. In the southern window the twelve lights above the transom are filled with modern stained glass representing the apostles ; in the lower half are the minor prophets ; in the opposite window the Radix Jesse and figures of Old Testament persons are represented.

Looking westward the view is bounded not by the grand arch so usual in Belgian churches, but by the eastern wall of the Romanesque tower, which is pierced only by a low pointed doorway, and richly emblazoned with the arms of bishops, by M. Béthune, to whom the polychromatic decoration of the whole interior is due.

Nôtre Dame, which stands a little eastward of the cathedral, was founded as a collegiate church by St Boniface in 745, and is a vast irregular pile illustrating all the periods of architecture. Some remains of a twelfth-century church exist in the north aisle of the nave, but the greater part of the present structure, including the choir, nave and its inner aisle, was in progress during the thirteenth and

BRUGES.

The Virgin and Child in Notre Dame.

fourteenth centuries. The tower was built between 1230 and 1297, the spire in 1320, and the outer aisles were added between 1480 and 1520.

Extensive restorations were made at the beginning of the century, and the structure, which had suffered much from the ill-judged mutilations and interpolations of debased epochs, has resumed its pristine character.

The plan, owing to the growth of the fabric at different periods, is a singularly irregular one.

The nave and choir, unintersected by a transept, are together eleven bays in length ; the sixth bay, which is much wider than the rest, divides the nave and choir into portions of equal length, and is flanked on the north by the tower. The choir terminates in a three-sided apse, and a corresponding apse opens from the centre of the ambulatory formed by the continuation of the choir aisles, whose east ends, together with the bays adjacent to them, form a triangle on the ground plan.

The first four bays of the north nave aisle open by Romanesque arcades—relics of an earlier building—into a narrow aisle, and this again into a much wider one, between which and its continuation into an apsidal chapel, stands the tower, flanked on its northern side by the baptistery. The outer south aisle of the nave is eight bays in length, and ends in a straight wall, beyond which are the sacristies and the chapel containing the altar tombs of Charles the Bold and Mary of Burgundy.

Such is the rough sketch of a plan whose irregularity confers upon the building, whether viewed externally or internally, a picturesqueness which is perhaps its leading merit.

The west front is flanked by circular turrets enriched from base to summit with three tiers of arcading, and capped with conical spirelets. Immediately above the grand central porch is a series of arcades, unpierced ; next comes a row of six

round-headed windows divided by a string-course from three very noble lancets, which being recessed have an outer plane of tracery imparting a richness and depth to the work; and these, in their turn, are surmounted by three more lancets on detached shafts with a wall space between them. The west ends of the adjacent aisles have graceful lancets also arranged in triplets. In these aisles the roofs are of the lean-to kind, while those of the additional aisles are separately gabled.

Quite a gem of late fourteenth-century Gothic is the little building which adjoins the tower on its north side.[1]

Buttresses adorned with canopied niches divide it lengthwise into two bays, within each of which is a square-headed doorway surmounted by a three-light window filled with curvilinear tracery. The hood moulding of the arches to these windows is ogee-shaped and crowned with a finial; the surrounding wall space is panelled; the gabled roof rises from behind a parapet perforated with diamond-shaped openings enriched with quatrefoils; and the whole stands out in striking contrast to the tower which, lifting its severe bulk to a prodigious height behind it, is crowned with pinnacles and an octagonal spire of red brick, crocketed, and relieved towards its apex with gables.

Within the church restoration has been pursued with commendable vigour. The triforium and clerestory of the nave, both of which had been sadly mutilated during the eighteenth century, have been brought back to what is presumably their original state, and the plaster removed from the red-brick cells of the groining.

Previous to restoration, which has been effected in bluish-grey stone, each bay of the triforium in the nave presented three round arches on square pillarets with plain capitals of nondescript character; now the arcades seem to be in a style transitional from

[1] Illustrated on p. 130.

Romanesque to Pointed, while in the clerestory tripled lancets have been substituted for wide pointed openings devoid of mullions or tracery.

The arcades separating the nave from its aisles rise from clustered columns with narrow foliaged capitals, while in the choir and apse the same type of column is used in conjunction with the simple cylindrical one.

The sixth bay of the nave, on either side, is wider and higher than the remaining ten into which the length of the church is divided; over it is a triforium arcade and a large circular window filled with geometrical tracery.

In their original state, the clerestory windows of the choir were simple lancets with boldly foliaged capitals of the crocket form to the jamb shafts. At a subsequent period, probably in the fifteenth century, it was thought desirable to introduce mullions and tracery into these windows, in the style then prevalent, but the arch was not sufficiently acute to lend itself to this treatment. It was, however, retained, as were its supporting shafts, and another arch of the requisite proportions, with shafts to correspond, built within it to contain the tracery. This is a restoration, the original work having been ruthlessly destroyed at a time when all feeling and veneration for mediæval antiquity was dead, and churches which had escaped the ravages of the Calvinists were being disfigured by their legitimate guardians, the successors of those holy and learned ecclesiastics who were at once the architects and ministers of the temple.

The first four bays of the north aisle of the nave open into the wide additional aisle to the left of it by round arches resting upon shafts which are niched in the wall at some height from the ground, but the statement put forth by some writers that they are remains of the eighth-century church must be received with caution. It is much more probable

that these piers and arches, which are in the style transitional from Romanesque to Pointed, form part of the northern wall of the aisle of a twelfth-century church which was gradually replaced by the structure we see to-day. When the large chapel adjoining was built in the fifteenth century the columns supporting its vaulting were not attached to these transitional piers, but were placed a little to the west of them, so that they stand isolated. By this means a very narrow aisle between the northern one of the nave and the chapel, which is prolonged considerably beyond the western façade, has been obtained. This irregularity is, however, productive of many picturesque effects, especially when the visitor, stationing himself at the north or south west angles of the interior, takes in the five rows of columns and arches at one view.

The choir is separated from the nave by a Late Renaissance screen of little merit supporting the organ, above which a large late sixteenth-century crucifix is suspended. In the upper part of the wall at the north-east corner of the procession path is a graceful piece of Flemish woodwork in the form of an oriel. This was the family pew of Sire Louis de Bruges, Seigneur de la Gruuthuyse, by whom it was constructed in 1474, and with whose residence it was formerly connected by a passage.[1] The window next to it on the right, the eastern one of the north choir aisle, is of three lights with geometrical tracery, and contains good modern stained glass representing fifteen small groups within medallions.

There is also good modern glass in the three windows of the apsidal chapel which opens from the middle of the procession path. Its iconography is interesting, type and antitype occupying adjacent lights in the same window. Thus the Queen of

[1] The Gruuthuyse, adjacent to the east end of Nôtre Dame, is now the property of the town. It has been restored with much intelligence, and is now a museum of antiquities.

Sheba's Visit to Solomon is paralleled by the Epiphany; Jonah cast from the Whale by the Baptism in Jordan; the Lifting up of the Brazen Serpent by the Crucifixion; the Translation of Elijah by the Ascension; and Moses receiving the Tables of the Law by the Descent of the Holy Ghost.

In a chapel opening from the south aisle of the choir by two semicircular arches of the Latest Gothic period are the tombs of Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, and his daughter, Mary, wife of the Emperor Maximilian—the last scions of the house of Burgundy, and the last *native* sovereigns of the Netherlands.

The effigies of both father and daughter, made of copper richly gilt, but not displaying any high excellence as works of art, repose at full length on slabs of touchstone and black marble highly polished. Both are crowned, and Charles the Bold is represented in full armour and wearing the decoration of the Golden Fleece.

Round the sides of each tomb is a genealogical tree, the branches of which support thirty-six angels with small enamelled escutcheons recording the string of duchies, counties and lordships which this illustrious and amiable heiress brought to the house of Austria, and which afterwards availed the empire on which the sun never set, of her grandson, Charles V.

The richness of these monuments, the historical interest attaching both to father and daughter, and the affection of the Flemish people for the memory of their young countess, who died, when pregnant, at the age of twenty-five, by a fall from her horse, while hawking with her husband near Bruges, having long concealed, out of affection for him, the mortal injury she had received, render them the chief objects of attraction for visitors to Nôtre Dame.

The altarpiece of the large chapel on the south side

of the nave enshrines what is perhaps the choicest *morceau* of this church—a marble group of the Virgin and Child, designed there can be no doubt by Michael Angelo, for there is a grandeur about the upper part of the Virgin's figure, and in the features, which resemble some of the works of the great Florentine, but whose execution was no doubt entrusted to one of his pupils.

In his " Journal of a Tour through part of Flanders and France, made in 1773 " James Essex, the Cambridge architect, alludes to Horace Walpole's offer of 30,000 florins for this *chef-d'œuvre*, whose acquisition that indefatigable dilettante desired to make for a collection of rarities, which, gathered from every available source both at home and abroad, he was piling up in such dainty confusion under the roof of Strawberry Hill.

Another very choice specimen of Italian handicraft is the majolica group by Della Robbia (probably Andrea) of the Virgin and Child within a circular panel surrounded by a wreath of fruit, over the altar of the Chapel of Ferry de Gros in the Church of St Jacques—a large and lofty brick structure featuring Nôtre Dame in some particulars.

Remains of good Middle Pointed detail may be discerned on the exterior of St Jacques, but on the whole it has suffered severely at the hands of tasteless innovators, many of the original features having vanished, and given place to clumsy and uninteresting Neo-Classic botchings.

The plan includes a nave and choir with wide aisles, all terminating at the same level in pentagonal apses. There are short transepts, the northern of which projects from the tower, a pleasingly outlined mass of brick relieved by shallow arcades, and occupying the first bay of the choir aisle. It rises in three stages above the roofs, the third stage being narrower than the other two and finished with a short quadrangular spire.

The windows of the apses terminating the choir and its south aisle have been deprived of their tracery and glass, and filled in with brickwork, but those of the northern apse have retained their tracery—a small trefoil—and their brick jamb-shafts with carved capitals. The transepts have been terribly modernised, likewise the nave aisles, whose windows are large Renaissance openings with depressed heads.

In the western elevation the gabled ends of the nave and south aisle only appear, a turn in the street on the north side of the church having necessitated the cutting off of a portion of the west end of that aisle. The western bay of the north aisle has therefore been made to meet the façade of the nave at an angle with an effect which must certainly be pronounced rather picturesque. A large octagonal turret is placed at the meeting of the two walls, and smaller turrets flank the gabled end of the south aisle, which, like that of the nave, has a large flamboyantly traceried window.

Within, the nave is divided into four, and the choir into three, bays by simple arches of grey stone. In the choir the first arch on the south side is semicircular. Some of the tall pillars are round, others octagonal, and all have very elongated capitals coarsely relieved by large crockets.

There is, however, very little to engage the attention of the architect in this church, most of its original features having disappeared under the hand of the eighteenth-century innovator, but its *ensemble*, by those to whom a continental interior is a novelty, will be considered imposing from its spaciousness, its rich Italian furniture, including a very sumptuous screen supporting the organ at the east end of the nave, and its pictures arrayed along the walls of the aisles on either hand.

The arch between the nave and the choir dies off into the piers without any capitals, but the four

supporting the tower rise from large circular columns having three slender shafts between them, and *à crochet* capitals. High up in the wall of the north choir aisle, which has a waggon-shaped roof with tie beams, are three windows, each of two lights.

The choir has a clerestory of large single lancets filled with stained glass representing figures of saints on white grounds, and a modern roof groined in wood. In the nave and aisles the debased ceilings still remain, that over the south aisle cutting off the upper part of the west window.

St Gilles, another large cruciform and brick structure, has been thoroughly restored, and is a very good specimen of a well-arranged town church. Its most imposing features are its wide separately gabled aisles and its tower, which is central and surmounted by a short octagonal spire without broaches or pinnacles. As at St Jacques the choir and its aisles terminate in a line with apses, a small chapel, likewise apsidal, being inserted between that of the choir and its north aisle. The transepts do not project beyond the line of the aisles, so that on the ground plan the church assumes the form of a parallelogram.

Originally the nave had a clerestory and aisles with lean-to roofs, but at a subsequent period the aisles were removed, and replaced by the existing very broad ones, which are of the same height as the nave and have their roofs separately gabled. The choir had also in all probability a clerestory and lean-to aisles continued as an ambulatory round its east end, but all traces of this arrangement have disappeared, the present choir and its aisles being uniform in height, and designed on the German "hall" plan. Of the original church, the nave arcade with its clerestory, and the central tower, are the only remaining portions, and appear to belong to the thirteenth century; the aisles and choir are alterations and additions of the fifteenth century.

The windows, which have all had their tracery restored to them, some in the geometrical, others in the flowing form of the second period of the Pointed style, are very large, that at the west end of the south aisle being a six-light one of unusually grand dimensions.

The central division of the west end has above the doorway a geometrically traceried window of four lights surmounted by a spherical one with tracery composed of three circles trefoiled. Between the gabled ends of the nave and the north aisle an octagonal turret with a low spiral capping breaks the long line of the façade very agreeably.

Within, the nave is divided from its aisles by three wide pointed arches of red brick rising from short cylindrical columns of the same material. Their capitals have octagonal abaci and the bold *à crochet* ornamentation to their bells so common in Early Flemish Gothic work.

The responds, or attached columns at each extremity of the arcade on either side, are composed of clustered shafts, square ones being mingled with the round, but all of brick. Above the arches is a series of lancets, ten on either side. These formed the clerestory, which when the lean-to aisles existed were of course seen outside. Now they are unglazed and look into the present spacious aisles, whose roofs, as well as that over the nave, are ceiled in wood and waggon-shaped. In the north aisle the wall is only commensurate in height with the three arches of the nave, so in order not to conceal the clerestory the roof here ingeniously takes a trefoiled shape.

The four arches supporting the central tower form one of the most impressive features of the interior. They rise from clusters of red-brick shafts, and from their narrow capitals, which are foliaged, springs a domical roof of eight cells groined in wood. Were this roof raised so as to leave one stage of the tower

visible from within the effect would be wonderfully improved. The western tower arch and those opening into the transepts have one order of grey stone, but the eastern arch is entirely of brick. Equally graceful are the attached columns and arches between the nave aisles and the transepts ; indeed, it is not too much to say that the whole of the brick-work in this church is as good as anything in Bruges, its skilful manipulation testifying to the charming results which may be obtained from this humble material.

There is an ascent of four steps from the transepts to the choir aisles, which are the same width as those of the nave. This part of the church has no clere-story, its three arches being carried upon tall circular columns having the carved ornament in their capitals richly gilded. The whole of the eastern part of the church is profusely coloured, and the furniture is almost entirely in the modern Gothic style. The general effect is, however, extremely good, and well supported by the stained glass in the windows of the three eastern apses. The organ, in a modern case, is placed upon a loft at the west end of the north choir aisle. There is no rood-screen of any kind, but Pugin in his "Treatise on Chancel Screens" mentions a seventeenth-century screen, rich in carving and supporting a rood-loft, as being in existence at the time of his visit when collecting material for the work in question, before 1850.

A very good choir screen of 1642, with five arches, may be seen in the Church of Ste Anne. Rebuilt at the beginning of the seventeenth century in a nondescript style, this church is totally devoid of grandeur, and from an architectural point of view uninteresting. It consists merely of a nave and choir comprised beneath one line of roof, without aisles, and ending in an apse. There is a western tower and spire. Within, however, the poverty of the architecture is more than compensated for by

the exuberant Early Renaissance furniture and decoration. The marble screen which supports a handsome organ and divides the long apsidal parallelogram into nave and choir, the richly carved wainscoting and confessionals, the brass chandeliers, and a large collection of pictures, some of them by the native artists, de Deyster and the elder Van Oest, unite in forming an interior which for picturesqueness is only equalled, though in a totally different style, by that of the neighbouring Church of St Sépulchre or Jerusalem.

This curious little structure was built about 1435 at the expense of Pierre and Jacques Adornes and their wives Elizabeth Bradericq and Anne Masins. So intent were the founders that this edifice should be an exact reproduction of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem that they made two journeys to the Holy Land expressly for this purpose, but there is nothing whatever in the similarity between the two buildings.

The church at Bruges, although raised during the most florid period of Pointed architecture, is a small brick building, as simple as can be imagined, and consists merely of a short aisleless nave opening at the east end into a tower which constitutes the chancel on the ground plan. Had this little structure been built in Pomerania or Brandenburg the steep gable of its western façade, for instance, would have been taken advantage of by the architect for some rich display of ornamented brickwork. Here, its only relief is a small spherical window without tracery. On either side the doorway, whose arch mouldings and jambs are continuous, is a pointed window of two lights without foliations, the two compartments being so disposed as to form a diamond, also unfoliated, with the head of the containing arch. There can be no doubt that this is the original form of these windows, as their ancient painted glass is still *in situ*, but they certainly partake of that dry, formal character which distinguishes some of the

quasi-Gothic carpentry of the eighteenth century. Two of the windows on the north and south sides are of the same kind, the third is circular.

The tower, one of the most picturesque features in the panorama of Bruges, is commensurate in breadth with the nave, and as far as the apex of the roof is square. It then becomes octagonal, turrets being pleasingly introduced at the angles formed by the north and south-west oblique sides, which are much shorter than the cardinal ones. These two turrets are also octagonal, terminate in cupolas of corresponding shape with gracefully curved ribs, and are carried up to the top of a wooden gallery which forms the third stage of the tower. The stage immediately below has on each side two plain pointed windows, glazed and divided into two compartments by thin iron mullions and arches similar to those in the windows of the nave.

Above the open gallery are two angular wooden turrets relieved by shallow, unpierced arcading, the upper and smaller turret being crowned by a large ball and pretty metal cross.

At a first glance the arrangement of the interior of this quaint little structure is reminiscent of the cathedral at Coire (or Chur) in Switzerland, the space beneath the tower being imposingly raised above the floor of the nave, from which it is approached by two flights of steps. At the top of each staircase a square-headed portal is inserted in the wall on either side of the arch which opens from the nave into the space beneath the tower. These entrances are of a type very frequent in the fifteenth-century work of Bruges, the lower half of the door being of wood, and solid, while the upper half is of brass, and open, in the shape of three trefoiled arches on banded shafts.

A very graceful stone screen in two stages crosses the arch between the tower and the nave, at about mid-height. The two stages are open, but differ in design. The lower presents a series of pointed arches,

subdivided into two trefoil-headed compartments, each of which is intercepted midway by a small square of stone carved either with a circlet containing a Maltese cross, or a Greek cross with four smaller crosses in the spaces formed by the arms of the larger one. The effect of this stone banding running continuously through the series of open arcades is exceedingly good, and apart from its ornamental character adds strength to the composition. Surmounting this, the lower portion of the screen, are three groups of narrow, trefoiled arcades, the pillarets being banded at mid-height and very similar in design to the brass ones used in the upper halves of the lateral doorways.

The tower is vaulted in wood from corbelled shafts, and the space formed by it is used as a choir by the inmates of the Convent des Sœurs Apostolines, who are concealed from the public gaze by curtains arranged behind the doorways and screen just described.

For parochial use there is an altar at the east end of the nave, having behind it three very tall crosses, of which the lateral ones assume the T form.

Under the impressively elevated choir is a crypt, quadripartitely vaulted in three bays, and entered by doorways on either side of the nave altar. To the right is another, and very small, aperture, through which you have to creep into a cavelike copy of the Holy Tomb, containing a recumbent effigy of Our Lord, crowned, behind a grating.

The nave roof is waggon-shaped, but takes a trefoiled form before leaving the wall plates, like that in Mr Gilbert Scott's remarkable Church of All Hallow's, Southwark. All the windows are filled with fifteenth and sixteenth century stained glass of the richest description, a Latin cross between two of the T shape being frequently represented in it.

A brass chandelier, sconces for candles, a carved pulpit and some pictures are other items in the furniture of this little building, which should on no

account be left unseen by those interested in ecclesiological anomalies.

In or about 1149 Theodoric of Alsace, Count of Flanders,[1] brought back from the Holy Land some drops of the Holy Blood, said to have been preserved by Joseph of Arimathea. For the enshrinement of this precious relic, which he presented to his faithful city of Bruges, Theodoric caused to be built what is to-day one of the most solemn and best-preserved specimens of Late Romanesque architecture in the Netherlands—the chapel dedicated to St Basil, the founder of Eastern monasticism, whose fame Theodoric must have learned when in Syria.

The plan is a nave with two aisles, and a chancel having a northern aisle, which is prolonged to some distance eastward and has a round apse. The nave and chancel of the chapel are groined in the form of two intersecting barred vaults without any mouldings to their ribs. The aisles being narrower, their longitudinal vaults are stilted. In the nave the pillars are massive cylinders on square plinths, with capitals formed by a narrow abacus, hollow-chamfered on the under side; but at the east end, where they adjoin the chancel, the "respond," or half pier, is flat, with a slender shaft niched on either side of it. These shafts have small cubiform capitals, as have those supporting the arch opening into the chancel, which terminates in a very simple apse without any break between its walls and vaults, and is lighted by a single round-headed window.

[1] It was on the Marché du Vendredi, in front of the present railway station, that on 30th March 1128 the towns-people, after having elected Theodoric to be Count of Flanders, returned the following spirited answer to the deputies of the King of France, who had sent to object to their choice:—"Go, tell your master that he is perjured; that his creature, William of Normandy (usurper of the sovereignty of Flanders), has rendered himself unworthy of the crown by his infamous extortions, that we have elected a new sovereign, and that it becomes not the King of France to oppose us. That it is our privilege alone, as burghers and nobles of Flanders, to choose our own master."

In the fifteenth century, when Bruges had grown richer, a second and more elaborate chapel, in which the holy relic is exposed on Fridays, was raised above the early one. This upper chapel, which is dedicated to the Holy Blood, and approached by a winding staircase of the most attractive Flamboyant character, groined in red brick, comprises a broad nave and a narrow south aisle separated by a most sumptuous arcade in imitation of the style transitionary from Romanesque to Pointed. The arches are round, and rise from short columns formed of semicircular and square shafts with most delicately foliaged capitals, and all richly polychromed.

On the opposite side of the chapel is a range of two-light windows filled with modern stained glass. The east end is destitute of windows, but is coloured up to the vault. Something more than diaper would have been satisfactory here ; nevertheless the whole of the effect, viewed as a piece of coloration, is extremely satisfactory, and the painting of the vault, both of chancel and nave, contributes to the richness of the effect ; for in this instance the stereotyped blue ground and gold stars are diversified by rich borders and symbolic centres, so that they produce an agreeable and even original *ensemble*.

This upper chapel was restored in 1856 under the direction of Mr T. H. King (author of " The Study Book of Mediæval Architecture and Art "), whose letter " from a member of the University of Oxford converted to the [Roman] Catholic religion," addressed in 1849 to the Conseil Provincial of Western Flanders, was mainly instrumental in bringing about the revival of the true principles of Gothic architecture in Belgium.

Of the Renaissance churches in Bruges the most noticeable is that dedicated to Ste Walburge, a truly noble specimen of the style as practised in Belgium during the first half of the seventeenth century. It consists of a nave and short sanctuary of equal

height, with aisles, lofty clerestory, and tower placed, in the manner not unusual in Flemish churches of its period, behind the apse.

The western façade is built entirely of stone, and in two storeys, the three divisions of the lower storey answering to the nave and aisles, and the upper one to the clerestory. Here the order employed is the Corinthian, the pilasters with their attached columns and bold entablatures in the ground storey, and the square-headed window between two columns on tall pedestals in the upper one, being especially admirable. Internally Ste Walburge's is spacious and majestic, but by some caprice the architect has placed above the round columns and arches of his Roman Doric arcade an entablature, which, belonging as it does to a tall Corinthian order, required square piers with pilasters attached to them for its support. The arrangement of the capitals of this entablature, in the form of brackets which fill the spandrels of the arches, is not very successful; but though the Doric order has to support this heavy entablature, a clerestory, and a vault above, the effect of the whole is satisfactory. We feel not only that the support is sufficient, but that the architect knew it would be so, and secured the safety of his superstructure by the immense solidity of the parts he employed.

The soffits of the seven round arches on either side of the nave are relieved with panels, and the tall cylindrical columns from which they rise are, as regards their octagonal plinths, reminiscent of the Gothic. The seventh bay and a portion of the sixth are separated from the remainder by a low marble balustrade (most exquisitely sculptured), so as to constitute a *chorus cantorum*, the aisleless bay beyond, together with the apse, forming the sanctuary. The black-and-white marble pavement, three altarpieces of the same material, and a coped Renaissance lectern of brass, are in every way com-

mensurate with the grandeur of the fabric, but the chief object of attraction is the beautiful pulpit. The sounding board, supported by two light and graceful angelic figures, the high relief of the carvings that surround the pulpit, the singularly rich and sharp foliage which forms the balustrade, the airy figures on either side of the stairfoot; above all, the noble statue of Faith, with cross and chalice, kneeling upon the Scriptures, and far from bending beneath the weight she is represented as supporting, seeming to uphold it with a single finger; constitute altogether a work of extreme taste and beauty, and render it one of the chastest specimens of this kind which can be seen in the Netherlands.

While the prosperity of Bruges has been steadily declining since the departure of the foreigners who mainly supported its trade, the neighbouring city of Ghent has, on the contrary, been increasing in wealth and influence.

If it were within the scope of this work to enter upon the causes of the rise and fall of the towns in which the great churches exist which it undertakes to illustrate, it would be easy to account for the manifest superiority of Ghent over Bruges at the present day, as well as to trace its gradual progress from its first foundation. But it is enough to say that Ghent has always been honourably distinguished for the patriotism and public spirit of its citizens, while the Brugeois have been rather remarkable for their mercenary and selfish nature. Of this the public buildings of the two cities afford a striking example; for whereas those of Ghent are among the finest in the Low Countries,[1] Bruges has few worthy

[1] The thirteenth-century hospital of the Byloque at Ghent may be mentioned as an exceptionally fine example of the capabilities of brick when properly employed. The façade of the refectory is unequalled in this respect; and by the purity and boldness of its tracery, and other details, recalls the churches and public buildings of Lübeck, where working in brick was carried to the highest perfection, but which include no example superior to

of the eminence it enjoyed in its prosperous days. And it may also be noticed that, while Bruges seems to have suddenly collapsed, there has been no period in which Ghent has not been thriving; so that the architectural works even of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries are worthy to compare, not indeed in style, but in magnificence and splendour with those of any other period.

Of the Church of St Bavon, which was raised to the dignity of a cathedral in 1559, the earliest existing portion is the crypt. It was consecrated in 941 by Transmare, Bishop of Noyon, and although considerably altered and extended in 1274, when the present choir was begun, preserves, in its western portion, its original form. The nave and transepts of the tenth-century church had been rebuilt half-a-century before the choir (*c.* 1228), but of the work of this period there are, unfortunately, no remains, as on 7th August 1533 the foundations of the present nave and transepts were laid. Between the completion of the choir in 1300 and the reconstruction of the western part of the church the tower was begun, Philippe Courould, Abbot of St Pierre, laying the first stone of it 26th May 1461, but it was not completed, from the designs of the architect, Jean Stassins, until the year after the commencement of the existing nave and transepts.

The extent of the original choir is defined by the work in the crypt, whose first three bays are Romanesque, while the remaining two, together with the aisles, the apse and the five chapels radiating from the ambulatory, were added when the eastern part

this masterpiece at Ghent. The façade of this refectory is very fine. It is pierced with high windows, and the trefoil-shaped roof, which remains as a curious specimen of the carpentry of the period, exhibits some traces of its original painting. The façades of the infirmary and the adjoining chapel are likewise extremely beautiful, the fenestration of the former deserving especial attention as a piece of early thirteenth-century work.

GHENT

THE CLOISTERS OF THE ABBEY OF ST. BAVON

From a water-colour painting by A. Forestier

of the church was rebuilt on its present grandiose scale towards the end of the thirteenth century.

Of the five chapels which surround the ambulatory the first on either side is triangular, while the remainder have three sides. The same shapes appear, of course, in the chapels of the superstructure, where the large windows, which occupy the whole of their sides, have been walled up or are merely provided with a series of mullions running from the sills to the heads of the arches without any tracery, in a very debased fashion.

The exterior of Ghent Cathedral, though dignified, can hardly be pronounced picturesque, owing to the almost entire absence of buttresses. In some respects it resembles that of St Sauveur at Bruges, particularly as regards the nave, whose comparative shortness is due to the fact that, when the tower was commenced, the earlier, and in all probability less lofty, nave was standing.

The aisles, both in nave and choir, are included with their flanking chapels beneath one slope of roof, so that the latter are not apparent externally. Westward the nave aisles open into a kind of transept gabling from the north and south sides of the nobly proportioned tower, whose highest stage, an octagon with pinnacles attached to its oblique sides by small flying buttresses, supports the base of a spire destroyed by a fire in 1603.

The great transepts are deep, but are without aisles, and their gabled ends, pierced by enormously long windows of eight lights crossed by a transom, are flanked by turrets.

Entered by the doorway in either transept, the first view of St Bavon is very impressive, from its great height and spaciousness, while the flights of steps leading to the choir and its aisles, rendered necessary by the crypt, give a dignity and interest that is unusual in Belgian church interiors.

No less remarkable is the natural colouring of the

church, which judicious restoration has brought out in a manner as harmonious as it is beautiful. In the earliest parts—the columns and arches of the choir and the chapels which line its aisles—the stone is of a bluish-grey colour; elsewhere it is white. Except for the filling in of the vaulting, which is of red brick, stone is exclusively used in the choir. In the nave and transepts stone is employed only for the piers and groining ribs, the walls and vaults being almost entirely of brick.

The great columns supporting the arches on either side of the choir are cylindrical, with four slender shafts attached; the triforium has trefoiled arcades arranged in pairs and surmounted by a quatrefoiled circle; and the clerestory windows, which are entirely filled with modern stained glass, representing figures of saints under canopies, are of six lights in the choir and of four in the apse. The tracery throughout these windows is geometrical, and very good. The shallow chapels which flank the choir aisles have a very simple ribless barrel vaulting, and windows of three rather wide lights with tracery composed of three quatrefoiled circles.

In the nave, towards whose completion the Emperor Charles V. contributed 15,000 crowns, in 1550, the whole character of the work is changed. The four graceful arches separating it from the aisles spring without capitals from columns attached to a pier, on the north and south sides of which are tripled shafts whence the ribs of the somewhat intricately groined roof ramify.[1]

There is no distinct triforium, but in front of the unrelieved wall below the clerestory windows a pierced parapet of stone has been placed in lieu of the simple iron railing, which until the restoration of the interior served to guard the passage over the pier arches.

[1] The grouping of the bases of these several columns and shafts is extremely fine, and well worth the study of the architect.

In the windows of the chapels and clerestory, which are of six and five lights respectively, the tracery is flamboyant. Especially worthy of notice are the small pendent bosses at the intersections of the ribs in the groining of the nave and aisles, and the great arch, which, rising from its piers without capitals, opens from the nave into the space beneath the tower. The six-light window above the western doorway is filled with excellent modern stained glass, each light containing a single canopied figure, whose brilliant tinctures are admirably set off by a judicious use of white. There are no arches of communication between the tower and the quasi-transepts at the west end of the nave aisles.

St Bavon suffered material injury from the fanatic depredations of the iconoclasts in the August of 1566 ; four hundred of the lowest class of the people, entering the cathedral by night, commenced by torchlight the work of demolition, dashing the images and painted glass to pieces with their poleaxes, effacing the rich sculpture, and cutting the pictures to shreds. Within three or four days every church in Ghent shared a like fate. Philip II.'s vengeance being thus aroused brought upon Belgium the horrors of the Inquisition and the scourge of an Alva—confiscation, exile or death were the consequences.

The Renaissance style was in the ascendant when, at the close of the sixteenth or the beginning of the seventeenth centuries, the choir was equipped with the sumptuous screens of marble and brass which we now see enclosing the chapels or filling the spaces between the columns of the choir beyond the stalls. The high altarpiece, with its canopy supported by two Corinthian columns, the paintings in grisaille of subjects from the Old and New Testaments above the choir stalls, the screen at the entrance to the choir, and the pulpit in the nave, are additions of the eighteenth century.

The great organ-case, of good Renaissance char-

acter, is stationed in front of the arch opening from the north transept to the choir aisle upon a screen similar in design to, and forming a continuation of, that anomalous pile of black-and-white marble which, if incongruous, certainly gives an air of mystery and greater length to the richly furnished choir. The choir organ-case is placed behind the great one, in lieu of being bracketed out in front of it, and looks into the aisle. The northern half of the great choir screen forms a gallery for the singers and instrumentalists, who are thus brought into direct communication with the organist.

In the sanctuary are the monuments of four bishops of Ghent, the finest being those of Antoine Triest by Jerôme Duquesnoy, and of Eugène Albert d'Allamont, ninth bishop (d. 1673), by the Liége sculptor, Jean Delcourt.

It was during the episcopate of Bishop Triest that the four great copper candlesticks which stand upon the floor of the sanctuary in front of the high altar were added to the furniture of the cathedral.

Of early Renaissance workmanship, and each nine feet high, these candlesticks were from the designs of Benedetto da Rovezzano, an Italian artificer introduced into England by Wolsey, and are believed to have been originally made as columns for the mausoleum which the Cardinal caused to be begun for himself, six years before his death, within the Tomb House added by Henry VII. at the south-east angle of St George's Chapel, Windsor.

On the disgrace and death of Wolsey these columns were altered into candlesticks, and given by Henry VIII. to Old St Paul's Cathedral, where they remained until the general wreckage of churches at the time of the Civil Wars. Subsequently, during the Protectorate, they were sold by order of the Parliament, apparently finding a purchaser in Antoine Triest, the prelate above alluded to. Among the enrichments of these candlesticks are shields

bearing on their quarterings the arms of Henry VIII. —three lions passant gardant and three *fleurs de lys*— and those of St Paul's Cathedral, the well-known swords in saltire.

The statement that the Chapter of St Bavon refused, some years ago, to sell or exchange these candlesticks with the Chapter of St Paul's may very well be believed, since the pictures and other artistic objects in the Belgian cathedrals are the property of the state, and cannot be sold without the authority of the Government—an authority which, it need hardly be said, is never granted.

There is an admirable cast of one of these candlesticks in the Victoria and Albert Museum at South Kensington, from which, as well as from drawings made from the original at Ghent, the facsimile pair now standing in the sanctuary of St Paul's were made.

The great treasure of Ghent Cathedral is Jan and Hubert van Eyck's triptych in the Chapel of Adam and Eve—the Adoration of the Immaculate Lamb, styled by Guicciardini " præstantissima tabula, qua representatur triumphans Agni Dei, etsi quidam improprie dicunt Adami et Evæ, opus sane præclarum et admirandum." Begun in 1420 for Judocus Vydts, Seigneur de Pamèle, this altarpiece was not finished until twelve years later, 6th May 1432. In the interim, Hubert, the elder of the brothers Van Eyck, died, and the work was carried on to completion by Jan. The share which each of the brothers took in this great series of pictures cannot be precisely ascertained. The central piece—the Adoration of the Lamb—the figure of Our Lord in Majesty, St John Baptist, the Blessed Virgin and Adam and Eve—is usually attributed to Hubert, and the rest to his brother. It must, however, be borne in mind that owing to the dismemberings this great work has undergone at different times, the four paintings in the central portion of the triptych are alone original, all the rest being copies.

In 1794 the altarpiece was taken to Paris, and on its restoration to St Bavon, in 1816, the central portion only was replaced in its former position. The four lower panels of the wings, representing knights, crusaders, hermits and pilgrims, moving in procession to the Fountain of Life, and two of their upper panels, representing respectively a group of singing angels, and St Cecilia attended by angels with musical instruments, were, either ignorantly or from avaricious motives, disposed of to a dealer named Solly, from whom they were purchased for the Old Museum at Berlin, where they still are. The backs of the four lower panels bear portraits of the donor and his wife, St John the Evangelist, and St John the Baptist; those of the two upper ones, the Archangel Gabriel and the Blessed Virgin, forming, when placed together, a group of the Annunciation.

The Emperor Joseph II. having, when on a visit to Ghent in 1784, taken exception to the nude figures of Adam and Eve, the authorities at St Bavon were induced to keep the triptych closed. On its return from Paris in 1816 these figures, being deemed unsuitable for a church, were detached from the rest, and kept concealed down to 1861, when they were given to the Musée Royale at Brussels, and the draped ones, by an artist named Lagye, which we now see, inserted in the places once occupied by the originals. The accompanying illustration of this assemblage of pictures, conjoined with the minute description of it by Crowe and Cavalcaselle, in their "Notices of the Early Flemish Painters," will assist the reader in comprehending the iconography of what may be justly considered the most extensive and important example of the Early School of Painting in the Netherlands.

In the centre of the altarpiece, and on a panel which overtops all the others, the noble and dignified figure of Christ sits enthroned, in the prime of man-

hood, with a short black beard, a broad forehead and black eyes. On His head is the white tiara, ornamented with a profusion of diamonds, pearls and amethysts. Two dark lappets fall on either side of the grave and youthful face. The throne of black damask is embroidered with gold ; the tiara relieved on a golden ground covered with inscriptions in semicircular lines. Christ holds in His left hand a sceptre of splendid workmanship, and with two fingers of His right He gives His blessing to the world. The gorgeous red mantle, which completely enshrouds His form, is fastened at the breast by a large jewelled brooch. The mantle itself is bordered with a double row of pearls and amethysts. The feet rest on a golden pedestal, carpeted with black, and on the dark ground, which is cut into perspective squares by lines of gold, lies a richly jewelled openworked crown, emblematic of martyrdom. This figure of the Redeemer is grandly imposing ; the mantle, though laden with precious stones, in obedience to a somewhat literal interpretation of Scripture, falls from the shoulders and over the knees to the feet in ample and simple folds. The colour of the flesh is powerful, brown and glowing, and full of vigour, that of the vestments strong and rich. The hands are well drawn, perhaps a little contracted in the muscles, but still of startling realism.

On the right of Christ the Virgin sits, in her traditional robe of blue ; her long fair hair, bound to the forehead by a diadem, flowing in waves down her shoulders. With most graceful hands she holds a book, and pensively looks with a placid and untroubled eye into space.

On the left of the Eternal, St John the Baptist rests, long-haired and bearded, austere in expression, splendid in form, and covered with a broad, flowing, green drapery. On the spectator's right of St John the Baptist, St Cecilia, in a black brocade, plays on an oaken organ supported by three or four angels

with viols or harps. On the left of the Virgin a similar but less beautiful group of singing choristers standing in front of an oaken desk, the foremost of them dressed in rich and heavy red brocade. On the spectator's right of St Cecilia once stood the naked figure of Eve, now removed to the Brussels museum—a figure upon which the painter seems to have concentrated all his knowledge of perspective as applied to the human form and its anatomical development. Counterpart to Eve, and once on the left side of the picture, Adam is equally remarkable for correctness of proportion and natural realism. Here again the master's science in optical perspective is conspicuous, and the height of the figure above the eye is fitly considered.

Christ, by His position, presides over the sacrifice of the Lamb as represented in the lower panels of the shrine. The scene of the sacrifice is laid in a landscape formed of green hills receding in varied and pleasing lines from the foreground to the extreme distance. A Flemish city, meant, no doubt, to represent Jerusalem, is visible, chiefly in the background to the right ; but churches and monasteries, built in the style of the early edifices of the Netherlands and Rhine country, boldly raise their domes and towers above every part of the horizon, and are sharply defined on a sky of pale grey gradually merging into a deeper hue. The trees, which occupy the middle ground, are not of high growth, nor are they very different in colour from the undulating meadows in which they stand. They are interspersed here and there with cypresses, and on the left is a small date palm. The centre of the picture is all meadow and green slope, from a foreground strewed with daisies and dandelions to the distant blue hills.

In the very centre of the picture a square altar is hung with red damask and covered with white cloth. Here stands a lamb, from whose breast a stream of

blood issues into a crystal glass. Angels kneel round the altar with parti-coloured wings and variegated dresses, many of them praying with joined hands, others holding aloft the emblems of the passion, two in front waving censers. From a slight depression of the ground to the right, a little behind the altar, a numerous band of female saints is issuing, all in rich and varied costumes, fair hair floating over their shoulders, and palms in their hands; foremost may be noticed St Barbara with the tower and St Agnes. From a similar opening on the left, popes, cardinals, bishops, monks, and minor clergy advance, some holding croziers and crosses, other palms. This, as it were, forms one phase of the adoration. In the centre near the base of the picture a small octagonal fountain of stone, with an iron jet and tiny spouts, projects a stream into a rill, whose pebbly bottom is seen through the pellucid water. The fountain and the altar, with vanishing points on different horizons, prove the Van Eycks to have been unacquainted with the science of linear perspective. Two distinct groups are in adoration on each side of the fountain. That on the right comprises the twelve apostles, in light greyish-violet cloaks, kneeling barefooted on the sward, with long hair and beards, expressing in their noble faces the intensity of their faith. On their right stands a gorgeous array of three popes, two cardinal monks, seven bishops, and a miscellaneous crowd of church and lay men. The group on the left of the fountain is composed of kings and princes in various costumes, the foremost of them kneeling, the rest standing, none finer than that of a dark-bearded man in a red cloth cap stepping forward in full front towards the spectator, dressed in a dark blue mantle, and holding a sprig of myrtle. The whole of the standing figures command prolonged attention from the variety of the attitudes and expressions, the stern resolution of some, the eager

glances of others, the pious resignation and contemplative serenity of the remainder. The faithful who have thus reached the scene of the sacrifice are surrounded by a perfect wilderness of flowering shrubs, lilies, and other beautiful plants, and remain in quiet contemplation of the Lamb.

Numerous worshippers besides are represented on the wings of the triptych, moving towards the place of worship. On the left is a band of crusaders, the foremost of whom, on a dapple-grey charger, is clad in armour with an undercoat of green-slashed stuff, a crown of laurel on his brow, and a lance in his hand. On his left two knights are riding, also in complete armour, one on a white, the other on a brown, charger, carrying lances with streamers. Next to the third figure, a nobleman in a fur cap bestrides an ass, whose ears appear above the press ; on his left a crowned monarch on a black horse ; behind them a crowd of kings and princes. In rear of them, and in the last panel to the left, Hubert Van Eyck, with long brown hair, in a dark cap, the fur peak of which is turned up, ambles forward on a spirited white pony. He is dressed in blue velvet lined with grey fur, his saddle has long green housings. In the same line with him two riders are mounted on sorrel nags, and next them again a man in a black turban and dark brown dress trimmed with fur, whom historians agree in calling Jan Van Eyck. The face is turned towards Hubert, and therefore away from the direction taken by the cavalcade ; farther in rear are several horsemen. The two groups proceed along a sandy path, which yields under the horses' hoofs, and seems to have been formed by the detritus of a block of stony ground rising perpendicularly behind, on each side of which the view extends to a rich landscape, with towns and churches in the distance on one hand, and a beautiful vista of blue and snow mountains on the other. White fleecy clouds float in the sky. There is not to be found in

the whole Flemish school a picture in which human figures are grouped, designed or painted with so much perfection as in this of the mystic Lamb. Nor is it possible to find a more complete or better distributed composition, more natural attitudes or more dignified expression. Nowhere in the pictures of the early part of the fifteenth century can such airy landscape be met. Nor is the talent of the master confined to the appropriate representation of the human form, his skill extends alike to the brute creation. The horses, whose caparisons are of the most precious kind, are admirably drawn and in excellent movement. One charger stretches his neck to lessen the pressure of the bit; another champs the curb with Flemish phlegma; a third throws his head down between his forelegs; the pony ridden by Hubert Van Eyck betrays a natural fire, and frets under the restraint put upon it.

On the right side of the altarpiece we see a noble band of ascetics with tangled hair and beards and deep complexions, dressed in frock and cowl, with staves and rosaries, moving round the base of a rocky bank, the summit of which is wooded and interspersed with palms and orange-trees. Two female saints, one of them the Magdalen, bring up the rear of the hermit band, which moves out of a grove of orange-trees with glossy leaves and yellow fruit. In the next panel to the right, and in a similar landscape, St Christopher, pole in hand, in a long red cloak of inelegant folds, overtops the rest of his companions—pilgrims with grim and solemn faces. Here a palm and a cypress are painted with surprising fidelity.

The altarpiece, when closed, has not the all-absorbing interest of its principal scenes when open. It is subdivided first into two parts, in the upper portion of which is the Annunciation, in the lower the portraits of Jodocus Vydts and his wife, and imitated statues of St John the Baptist and St John

the Evangelist. In the semicircular projection of the upper central panel are the Sibyls, whilst half figures of Zachariah and Micah are placed in the semicircles above the annunciate angel and Virgin. With the exception of Jodocus and his wife and the Annunciation, the whole of this outer part of the panels may have been executed under supervision by the pupils of the Van Eycks.

A picturesque if somewhat irregularly outlined pile is the Church of St Jacques in the Marché du Vendredi. It exhibits an interesting admixture of styles. The west front, with its pair of towers—an unusual feature in Belgium—and the central tower, are Late Romanesque of a somewhat Rhenish type ; the nave and transepts belong to the Early and Middle Pointed periods, and the choir with its aisles and encircling chapels to the Flamboyant. There are side chapels to both nave and choir, and a lesser transept at the west end of the chapel flanking the nave, as at St Bavon.

The three steeples of St Jacques compose an engaging group. The central one, which is octagonal and of three stages, is crowned by a slate spire of very *elancé* proportions slightly spreading out at the base. Were the eight sides of the tower gabled, this central steeple at St Jacques would resemble the great Rhenish one at Bonn.

The spire on the north-western tower is also of slate, but quadrilateral, and not very lofty, while that surmounting the opposite one is octagonal and of stone, with crocketed ribs, small pinnacles, also of stone, but unsupported by turrets, being lodged in the angles formed by the tower with the oblique sides of the spire, as in the central steeple of Tournai Cathedral.

The lower parts of the towers, and the whole of the façade between them, were remorselessly Italianised during the era of Classicism, but within the last fifty years the entire front has been restored to

GHENT.

St. Jacques from the South-East.

what we may conclude was its original form, from the designs of M. Van Assche.

The doorway in the centre of the façade has three orders of semicircular arches sprung from shafts with foliaged capitals. Above the doorway is a round-headed window of two openings, the tympanum, or space between them and the enclosing arch, being left unpierced; and over this, in the space corresponding to the clerestory of the nave, is a very large circular window of sixteen foliations, but without any tracery in the centre of it. Such windows as this were used in the Rhenish provinces during the early part of the thirteenth century, either in the form of semicircles, as at Bonn and Sinzig, or of circles, as at St Cunibert's, Cologne. They are extremely bold and effective, and afford an advantageous field for the introduction of large subjects in stained glass. The nave of the great abbey church at Heisterbach, of which the apse is all that now remains, was lighted by a series of these windows, which, to judge from the drawings extant of that church in its complete state, must have produced a remarkably fine effect.

In the nave of St Jacques the columns are circular, short and stout, with bold crockets to their capitals by way of foliage. Tripled shafts take the ribs of the quadripartite vault, which is groined in red brick with deep cells, as are the roofs throughout the church. At the central tower, where the domical groining forms eight spaces, the transition from the square to the octagon is made by small pendentives or niches in the four corners, as in the grand central lantern of the cathedral at Limburg on the Lahn.

The chapels flanking the nave are separated from the aisles by pointed arches carried upon tall round pillars, and are lighted by windows of four compartments with tracery in the form of a large sexfoiled circle.

In the choir, which is loftier than the nave, the

arches spring from plain octagonal columns without capitals, a slender shaft being introduced on the cardinal side of each column facing the aisle to carry the groining ribs. The lower parts of these columns, to the height of the beautiful Early Renaissance screens behind the stalls, are panelled with marble, and within one of the arcades on the north side is a most graceful tabernacle of the same material. It dates from 1593, and rises in four stages, the two lower ones being octagonal and the two upper ones circular. The doors are of brass, and the canopy, soaring almost to the top of the arch beneath which it is placed, is crowned with the emblematic pelican.

One of the most imposing features in the panorama of Ghent is the central tower of St Nicholas—a Romanesque church of the tenth century transformed in the fifteenth into a Gothic one, in the poorest and weakest manner.[1] The best part is the west front, which with its circular turrets and double doorway, is an interesting example of Belgian First Pointed work. The original fenestration of the front appears to have been disturbed when the church was altered in the fifteenth century, and one huge window, reaching almost to the gable, substituted for what we may suppose to have been several tiers of lancets. Filled with good mullions and tracery, this window might appear tolerable ; in its present condition it is an eyesore. The tower has two tiers of three-light windows arranged in pairs, is flanked at the corners by circular turrets and pinnacles, and crowned with a low octagonal spire.

The Church of St Michel, although of early twelfth-century foundation, dates in its present form from the middle of the fifteenth. It is cruciform in plan, with clerestories, very lofty aisles, an unfinished western tower rising only one stage above the nave roof, a small octagonal turret at the junction of the nave and choir with the transepts, and a group of

[1] Illustrated on p. 140.

five chapels opening from the ambulatory behind the apse.

The nave aisles, which are very lofty and have their roofs separately gabled in order not to interfere with the clerestory—there being no triforium to speak of—are lighted by large windows of much beauty. These windows are of six compartments each, divided into groups of three by sub-arches, and their tracery, which is alternately curvilinear and rectilinear, is very suggestive of some of our best East Anglian work.

In the five-bayed nave and the three-bayed choir the columns are uniformly cylindrical, tall, most elegantly proportioned, and crowned with capitals foliaged in imitation of the colewort. The octagonal abaci of these capitals support the shafts from which the ribs of the roof ramify so as to form eight compartments or cells, whose red-brick filling in, as well as that of the aisles, transepts, crossing and choir, has been exposed by stripping it of its plaster. The walls are also of red brick, and combine with the stained glass, much of which, although modern, is far above the average, to produce a very agreeable mingling of natural and artificial colouring.

The graceful columns and arches of the apse, as well as the central window of the clerestory, are unfortunately concealed by a pretentious reredos in the Gothic style of eighty years ago.

One of the most interesting examples of the Early Complete Gothic style in Ghent was the thirteenth-century church of the Dominicans. It stood on the south side of the convent, which was the finest of the order in Belgium, and differed much from the other Dominican houses in that country in being formed of two quadrangles, instead of numerous irregular and detached blocks of building. Since the re-establishment of the Friars' Preachers in Ghent after the French Revolution, until about 1853, they rented the church from its lay proprietor, and tried

again and again to purchase it and a portion of the conventual buildings, but without success. For some years prior to its destruction in 1861—the Dominicans having built a new church in another quarter of the city—this remarkable building, which required comparatively little restoration, served as a warehouse for coals. When, in 1856, a distinguished English ecclesiologist was desirous of getting a peep into its interior he was only able to do so by climbing the roof of one of the parasitical houses which hung on to its walls, and then from the gutter looking through a pane of one of the windows which happened to be open. It was very discreditable to a Government like that of Belgium, which at that time was professing particular zeal for the preservation of national antiquities, to have permitted a building of such high architectural interest—to quote no other motive—thus to be abandoned and misused.

The plan of this Dominican church at Ghent was a parallelogram of ten bays without aisles, and about 167 feet long by 53 broad, in the clear. Side chapels were formed between the buttresses, which were internal and pierced with arches so as to form a narrow passage on either side of the nave. There was no other choir than was formed by the enclosure of the stalls, and the whole building was evidently designed with sole reference to the main work of the Dominican Order. Everything was sacrificed to the accommodation of the crowds who were to be attracted to the sermons and services of the Preaching Friars.

The east end was square. The arched and boarded roof was of uniform height throughout, intersected by transverse and diagonal wooden ribs which sprang from shafts attached to the massive internal buttress piers. At the west end was a gabled portal with sculpture representing the Virgin and Child and angels tossing thuribles in the tympanum above its

two obtuse-headed doorways ; and over this were three very tall windows without any wall space between them. The central window, which rose above the one on either side of it, was of eight lights, the others of four, and all had geometrical tracery composed of foliated circles of the very best kind. The ten windows lighting the north and south sides were placed high up in the walls, each being surmounted by a gable, on either side of which was a pinnacle.

Such a church, in which a view of the altar can be commanded by the whole congregation, is admirably suited for modern use in London and other large towns. As successful adaptations of this type of church to present-day needs, mention should be made of the Early Pointed St Bartholomew's, Brighton, by Mr Edward Scott, and of the Late Decorated St Augustine's, Pendlebury, by Messrs Bodley and Garner—two of the most remarkable churches that have been raised in England since the Gothic Revival.

CHAPTER V

MALINES AND BRUSSELS

THE last century has witnessed the completion of a remarkable number of continental spires and towers which were left unfinished by their mediæval builders. In France, the Cathedrals of Quimper and St Malo, and the Churches of St Maclou and St Ouen at Rouen, have, among others, had their spires added or restored to them. In Germany, the immense twins of Cologne are now visible with all their monstrous defects; the less enormous but far more pleasing spires of Ratisbon Cathedral have also been completed, and certainly are an addition to the beauties of that remarkably fine example of German Complete Gothic. The single western spire of the minster at Ulm has likewise been completed, and the Wiesen Kirche, or Church of Our Lady in the Meadows, at Soëst in Westphalia, has received its pair of western spires, but they are far less happy in their effect, as they serve to make the church—which was already too short—still more defective in proportion. The Dom at Bremen is once more in possession of its pair of western towers, gabled on each side and surmounted by tall metal spires of the Lübeck type, and a somewhat similar pair of steeples now flanks the west front of the Dom at Halberstadt. At Paderborn a metal spire has been added to the western tower, which hitherto had preserved its old cruciform saddleback form. At Münster the western tower and spire of St Lambert's have been rebuilt *de novo*, and the south-western tower of Naumburg

Cathedral has been carried up uniform in style and height with its sister on the north.

In England the spire of St Mary Redcliffe, Bristol, which was struck by lightning in 1446, and reduced to the truncated form it exhibited for more than four centuries, has been restored within the last five-and-fifty years under the direction of Mr Godwin.

Whether the completion of these vast mediæval towers is, as a rule, to be regarded as an unmixed success is a question that must be left to individual taste. It must, however, be allowed that the completion of the spires of Ste Mary Redclyffe, Ratisbon, Quimper and Naumburg, have added to the dignity of these buildings, but are the spires of Cologne anything but a gigantic failure? Those who recollect the grand effect produced by the solitary unfinished tower of the cathedral, with its weird-looking old crane on the top, pictured to their minds a magnificent result from the completion of this stupendous stump, but so little has that result been achieved that even the impression produced by vast size no longer exists. Whether this is attributable to some defect in the design, or whether it is that an unfinished building is sometimes more attractive than one which is completed, it is impossible to say. There can be no doubt that persons who have no architectural knowledge whatever can picture to their minds edifices which are far more splendid than anything which architect can devise and builder achieve, and therefore when we look at an unfinished tower, the terminations which our fancy would suggest are more lovely than any reality could make them.

The greatest spire ever projected during the Middle Ages is that of the Cathedral of St Rombaut, at Malines. The tower portion of this mighty steeple—as much a landmark for the lowlands of Brabant as those of Ely are for the level marshes and

meadows of Cambridgeshire—has alone been erected. Even now it is 350 feet high. Had the work been completed according to the design which still exists, it would have reached the stupendous height of 640 feet.

In his "Chronology of Mediæval and Renaissance Architecture," published in 1893, Mr Tavenor Perry gives 1583 as the year in which the work of carrying on the tower was suspended. There does not seem to have been any positive intention of abandoning it, as the bases of the flying buttresses supporting the upper lantern had been fixed, and the buttresses themselves carried up several feet. In point of design this projected spire at Malines would have been more elegant than the completed one at Antwerp, there being less inclination to wildness about it, if we may judge from the elevations given of it by Van Gestel, Azevedo, Sanderus, and other old writers on the topography of the Low Countries.

The last named, in his "Brabantia Sacra et Profana," reproduces an etching by Wenceslaus Hollar, dated 1649, and thus entitled:

"Εκτυπον. Turris Elegantissimæ S. Romoldi Mechlinæ si ut Exhibiture in typo tandem aliquando perficiatur."

Hollar copied his etching from the original architect's drawing, which is still in existence. Although drawn in elevation the projections are shown in a kind of perspective. This was probably intelligible enough to mediæval workmen, but in these days of taking out quantities, contracts, etc., it might lead to some unpleasant disputes. The niches shown in the elevation do not exactly agree with those in the perspective, and are often at different "ranges" upon the buttresses; but it is probable that the mediæval architect who drew out the elevation did not trouble himself about the portion of the work already executed. Then again, the original drawing

may not have been copied by Hollar with that amount of exactitude which a modern draughtsman would have given us in such a reproduction; but then it must be remembered that Hollar lived in days when people could not draw Gothic architecture correctly if they would, and would not if they could. He was, however, far away better than any other draughtsman of his time, as may be seen by comparing his illustrations in the Monasticon with those by contemporary hands.

Some uncertainty seems to prevail as to the dates of this cathedral. One writer, Van Gestel, assigns 1227 to the completion of the choir, and 1312 to the consecration of the church. These dates, comparing the style of the church with that of such buildings as Nôtre Dame de Pamèle at Oudenarde, and the choir of St Martin at Ypres, both works of the first half of the thirteenth century, must be totally wrong. It is much more probable that the work of rebuilding the old structure, which had been damaged by a fire, was not undertaken until the commencement of the fifteenth century, and that it was in progress during the greater part of that period is certified by the following inscriptions in Flemish, setting forth that the vaulting of the choir was finished in 1451 and that of the nave thirty-six years later :—

"In't jaer MCCCC yvftigheen
Wasd' jaer van jubileen hier gemeen,
Doen wort gesloten diesen steen."

"D'it werck wort gesloten in't jaer
MCCCCLXXXVII openbaer."

The work of rebuilding this vast edifice appears to have been carried on chiefly by means of the gifts presented on the occasion of the Papal Jubilee of

1451, and of those produced by the letters of indulgence granted to the faithful who should contribute towards its completion by Pope Nicholas V. in 1456 ; by Callixtus III. in 1458 ; and by Pius II. in 1464, who assisted the accomplishment of the work with his own means.[1]

St Rombaut at Malines, the metropolitan church of Belgium, is a very noble and spacious structure, and if deficient in those environments usually associated with one of cathedral rank, worthily upholds its dignity in other respects.

It must, however, be remembered that St Rombaut's did not become a cathedral until 1559, when that increase in the episcopate of the Netherlands which caused so much dissatisfaction, and contributed towards fomenting the religious disturbances of a few years later, was determined upon.

Ever since the reign of Charlemagne there had been six dioceses in the Netherlands: Arras, Cambrai, Tournai, Thérouanne, Liége, and Utrecht.

A redistribution of dioceses now took place. Cambrai and Utrecht, which had been suffragan to Rheims and Cologne respectively, were raised to the dignity of archbishoprics, the former including Tournai, Arras, St Omer,[2] and Namur in its province, and the latter, Haarlem, Middleburg, Leeuwarden, Groningen, and Deventer. At Malines a new archbishopric was founded, with, as suffragan sees, the also newly constituted ones of Antwerp, Bois-le-Duc, Roermond, Ghent, Bruges and Ypres, the first

[1] Murray in his handbook gives 1437 as the date of the nave and 1451 as that of the choir, both of which agree better with the architecture of the building than those assigned to it by Kugler in his "Geschichte der Baukunst" (vol. iii. p. 412) and by Schayes in his "Histoire de l'Architecture en Belgique"; for instance the nave is certainly earlier in style than the choir.

[2] The bishopric of St Omer was founded to replace that of Thérouanne, which city had been destroyed four years before, in the war between Henri II. of France and the Emperor Charles V.

archbishop being Antoine Perrenot de Granvella, the unpopular minister of the then Regent of the Netherlands, Margaret of Parma.

The archbishopric of Malines remained until the invasion of 1794 by the French Republicans, " who did not fail to carry out their intentions with regard to the abolition of religious worship in their conquered provinces, as in France."

" The Bishops of Belgium fled. Brenart, Bishop of Bruges, retired to Westphalia, and died, 1794; De Lobkowitz of Ghent to Münster; De Nelis, of Antwerp, to Tuscany; Charles D'Arberg of Ypres, and Jean Batiste de Melroy of Roermond followed the others; Guillaume de Salm-Salm, the last Bishop of Tournai, was transferred to Prague. The Archbishop of Malines (Cardinal de Franckenberg) and the Bishop of Namur (Albert Louis of Lichtervelde) courageously remained at their posts to weather the storm." [1] The former, however, was arrested for refusing to comply with the iniquitous demands of the Republic " and would have been transported to Cayenne or Oléron, had not the English navy prevented French ships from crossing the Atlantic. He was driven into exile across the Rhine."

" Napoleon, discovering the fact that religion was necessary for the welfare, peace and prosperity of a country, and that without the blessings of Christianity nations can never achieve greatness or preserve their stability, the restoration of the churches in France and Belgium became a leading principle in the policy of the First Consul. Negotiations with Rome were opened, and the famous Concordat of 1801 was finally arranged." There were no " Constitutional " bishops in Belgium as there were in France, created by the Act of 1790, " but the article of the Concordat ordering the new circumscription

[1] From "The Church in the Netherlands," by the Rev. P. H. Ditchfield.

of dioceses was put into force, and the ecclesiastical map of the country received many alterations." [1]

To the restored arch-see of Malines, John de Roquelaure, Bishop of Senlis, was appointed. Tournai, Ghent and Namur were restored as suffragan sees, and Aix-la-Chapelle, Trèves and Mayence were added. Antwerp, Bruges, Ypres and Roermond were suppressed.

After the Revolution of 1830, by which the Church of Belgium was entirely emancipated from the control of the state, the Belgian hierarchy was again rearranged, Malines, remaining the primatial see, with, as suffragan sees, Tournai, Ghent, Namur, Liége and Bruges, which order has been continued to the present day.

Malines Cathedral is a typical building of the fifteenth century. The great arch opening from the tower into the nave, the circular column, the lofty clerestory, the elongated transept, and the five-sided apse, with its procession path and radiating chapels, are all here.

The great size of the columns is due to successive coatings of plaster, which have effectually concealed their true material and that of the arches, which is a stone of bluish-grey hue. One pillar, the last on the north side of the nave, together with the arch which it supports, has been stripped of this plaster, and now appears in its original and slenderer dimensions. The red-brick filling in of the vault in the apse has likewise been exposed, and it is to be hoped that ere long the whole of this nobly proportioned interior may be revealed in its true colours; at present it is, with the two small exceptions above noted, a uniform mass of white.

Respecting the assiduity with which the Belgians periodically whitewashed and painted their churches,

[1] From "The Church in the Netherlands," by the Rev. P. H. Ditchfield.

MALINES.

The Cathedral from the South.

MALINES.

The Nave of the Cathedral, looking East.

Mgr. le Comte de Montalembert, the ardent Gothic Revivalist—the Pugin, if he may so be termed, of France—wrote thus, eighty years ago :

" Quant au règne du badigeon, il est encore bien plus universal et plus solidement établi en Belgique qu'en France. Je ne crois pas qu'à l'exception de Sainte Waudru de Mons, il y ait une seule église de Belgique, grande ou petite, qui ne soit pas périodiquement radoubée et mastiquée d'une pâte impitoyablement épaisse ; il en résulte que la sculpture, si florissante au moyen âge en Belgique, est comme annulée partout où il s'en trouve quelques monumens dans les églises : comment reconnaître non seulement l'expression, mais jusqu'aux premières formes d'une figure qui est recouverte d'au moins dix couches successives de plâtre ? On ne se figure pas le changement que subiraient toutes les églises belges, si quelque chimiste tout-puissant trouvait le moyen de les dégager de cette enveloppe déjà séculaire, et de les rendre à leur légérité primitive.

" Il n'y a pas jusqu'au délicieux jubé de Louvain, dont la transparence ne soit interceptée autant que possible par un voile écailleux. Seulement au lieu du beurre frais et de l'ocre, usités en France, c'est le blanc qui est universellement adopté en Belgique, un blanc vif, luisant, éblouissant, dont on ne se fait pas une idée avant de l'avoir vu. On sort de là comme d'un moulin, avec la crainte d'être soi-même blanchi."

The capitals of the columns have two rows of leafage, which in the case of the column that has been stripped of its plaster has been taken away, clearly showing, from the holes pierced in the bell of the capital, that this ornament was worked separately and then applied, instead of being carved out of the block itself.

In general appearance the choir is much richer than the nave. This is attributable to the panelling which covers the wall spaces on either side of the triforium and clerestory, and the spandrels of the arches. In the nave these spaces were left plain, but during the debased Classical period an attempt was made to " beautify " them by means of plaster festoons and other incongruities, as may be seen in the accompanying view of the interior which was made by Charles Wild—the most accomplished architectural draughtsman of his day—between 1820 and 1830.[1]

These miserable attempts at " embellishment " as well as the pagan figures which concealed the vaulting shafts, have been happily removed, and the elevation made to assume its original appearance.

The tracery in the clerestory windows of the nave and choir is very good, especially in those of the former, where a large circle of eight foliations surmounts the five lights. Stained glass of a quiet and unobtrusive design fills all these windows, the central compartment in each containing a canopied figure, and the pair on either side pattern-work. In the two-light windows of the apse clerestory the glass is likewise modern, but earlier than that in the nave. It represents saints under canopies, and if not of the highest order has not the positive faults of overshading and violent attitudes. The artist was Pluys, to whom is likewise due the glass which was inserted in the great windows of the transepts to commemorate the promulgation, in 1854, of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception.

There is a series of apsidal chapels on the north side of the nave, but none on the south. The vaulting

[1] With all respect for Prout, it must be admitted that Wild was quite unequalled for the severe truth and fidelity with which he touched upon Gothic architecture, while his pictorial adjuncts were, almost invariably, very appropriate and correct.

shafts here are of the same design as the pillars of the main arcade, but those in the choir are without capitals.

In the south aisle of the nave the window tracery is composed of two small quatrefoils and one large sexfoil. At the west end of this aisle stands the font, of black and dark grey marble. Its circular bowl, carried upon a pedestal shaped like an urn, with four Ionic pillarets grouped round it, has a low brass canopy surmounted by a cone. Close by is a coped lectern of Late Renaissance workmanship. The two perforated brass desks are surmounted at their junction by the figure of a bishop.

In the pulpit, one of those elaborately fanciful specimens of wood-carving for which the Belgian artists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were so renowned, figures, the size of life, represent the Conversion of St Paul. The saint and his horse are on the ground at the foot of the mass of rock forming the base of the structure. Our Lord on the Cross, and a number of other figures enter into the composition. The stem of a fallen tree serves as a handrail to the stairs, and a mass of carving, in the form of branches and foliage, surmounts the sounding board.

On the western wall of the north transept is an old picture of the cathedral showing it to have been furnished with a choir screen of Classical design. This would appear to have been removed, and portions of it set up at the west end of either nave aisle before Wild made his drawing, in which a low balustrade of Italian pattern may be seen. About eighty years ago this was replaced by a tall but open screen of Pointed design. The material was wood, painted, and the design was infinitely flimsy, not even compassing a horizontal cresting nor any superstructure to preserve continuity when the gates were open; still it was better than nothing, and

might have been left until it was possible to replace it with work worthy of the building. As it is, the grilles and gates have been removed, and the low septum on which the former rested now constitutes the only division between the nave and the choir of this, the primatial church of Belgium.

Among the pictures is a series representing the principal incidents in the life of St Rombaut, presented by the bishops, abbots and abbesses of the province on the occasion of the Papal Jubilee which was celebrated in this cathedral in 1775. Their merit, as works of art, is but little ; nor are the other pictures in St Rombaut of much interest, with the exception of one in the transept, by Van Dyck, which was originally painted for the high altar of the Church of the Recollets, now entirely destroyed.

This picture, painted by Van Dyck after his return from Italy, is justly considered among his finest works. It represents the Saviour upon the Cross, in the placid repose of death, between the two thieves, who are still writhing in its agonies. At the foot of the cross is St Mary Magdalene, whose hair Sir Joshua Reynolds found fault with as being too silky, and looking more like silk drapery than hair. On the right-hand side of the cross is the Virgin in the deepest grief ; behind her is St John ; and on her left an armed soldier on horseback, whose action and countenance express a profound astonishment at the awful scene ; in front of him is the half-naked executioner, and in the distance a crowd of people.

The effect of this picture is highly impressive, for the artist has contrived to convey an idea of that supernatural darkness which attended the event; and the colouring throughout, though considered by some critics as too cold, is certainly appropriate.

The Church of St Jean, an uninteresting Late Gothic structure, has a well-proportioned western tower, to which the angular turrets attached to its

north and south sides impart an outline of much picturesqueness. These turrets, which rise to the full height of the tower, do not stand in the centre of the sides but at their eastern ends, and have gabled roofs curiously joined on to the eastern pair of four pinnacles, which are attached to the oblique sides of an octagonal slate spire, as in the central steeple of Tournai Cathedral. The effect of this arrangement is such as to make the mass appear much broader viewed from the east than from the opposite quarter ; but to anyone desirous of striking out something abnormal in the way of tower design, this of St Jean at Malines might furnish some interesting hints.

In plan this church is cruciform, with a lofty chapel opening from the eastern side of the north transept, the choir terminating in an apse with geometrically traceried windows of four lights. The columns in the nave are circular, but their capitals are devoid of ornament, and there is no arcading in the space between the arches and the clerestory windows, which are of three compartments with flamboyant tracery. The aisles have brick-vaulted roofs of the usual quadripartite form, while those of the nave and choir are waggon-shaped, and have their transverse ribs supported on Renaissance corbels. There is some fair wood-carving ; in the pulpit, which has, at its base, a group representing the words " Feed my Lambs " ; in the great organ-case, which is fitted into the wall within the tower arch ; and in that of the choir organ, which occupies the front of a narrow gallery. On either side the choir are eleven stalls, with subsellæ, the former having their backs relieved with a series of Ionic pilasters, and in the apse is a large Renaissance altarpiece containing pictures by Rubens, the Adoration of the Magi, the Decollation of St John the Baptist, and St John the Evangelist in the cauldron of boiling oil, concerning

which Sir Joshua Reynolds, in his "Tour in Holland and Flanders," has recorded the following impressions:—

"The Adoration of the Magi is a large and rich composition; but there is a want of force in the Virgin and Child—they appear of a more shadowy substance than the rest of the picture, which has his usual solidity and richness. One of the kings holds an incense vase. This circumstance is mentioned to distinguish this picture from the many others which Rubens has painted of this subject.

"On the inside of one of the doors is the Decollation of St John the Baptist; on the other, St John the Evangelist in the caldron of boiling oil. The figures which are putting him into the caldron want energy, which is not a common defect of Rubens. The character of the head of the saint is vulgar, which, indeed, in him is not an uncommon defect. The whole is of a mellow and rich colouring. On the outside of these doors are John baptising Christ and St John the Evangelist in the Isle of Patmos writing the Apocalypse. Both of these are in his best manner. The Eagle of St John is remarkably well painted. The Baptism is much damaged."

Sir Joshua mentions eight small paintings in panels under these, all by Rubens, but showing little merit, except facility of hand. The subjects were the Crucifixion, the Nativity and the Resurrection. The first alone remains. The others, it is believed, were not returned with the rest of the pictures from France.

For these eight pictures Rubens was paid 1800 florins of Brabant, equivalent to about £180 of English money, as appears by the receipt in his own handwriting, still preserved in the sacristy; and the whole was begun and finished in eighteen days.

A pleasing specimen of early fifteenth-century

architecture is the Church of Ste Catherine. Here the tower is central and rises one storey above the roofs of the nave choir and transepts. The spire is of slate, and square, and spreads out at the base like some of our Kent and Sussex examples. At the west end of the north aisle an apsidal chapel projects beyond the front of the nave, which has a six-light window and a doorway with three niches in its tympanum. Another chapel thrown out from the north side of the church and projecting considerably beyond the transept gives an agreeable variety to the outline. The low clerestory is lighted by a series of round windows, some of which have their tracery composed of three foliated circles, and others of three spherical openings, also foliated. At the west end of the south aisle is a traceried rose window of remarkably pretty design. The aisleless choir is, as usual, apsidal, the central window being of four, and the side ones of three, lights.

The interior, notwithstanding its comparatively small dimensions, is wonderfully impressive, especially when viewed from the east end, and the nave arcade, whose columns are short circular ones with a single row of leafage on the bells of their capitals, has much dignity. The roof over the nave is waggon-shaped and of wood, with tie beams ; those of the aisles are also of wood, and take a semicircular form. Altogether Ste Catherine's may be accepted as a very good example of the cruciform, but less pretentious, town church, and as such affords a relief to the eye satiated with those of the cathedral type.

From the bridge across the Dyle in the Brulstraat, leading from the railway station to the Grande Place, a very charming view is to be had of the apse, transepts, and unfinished western tower of Nôtre Dame.

This grandly proportioned Flamboyant church was in course of erection between 1500 and 1550, and as a whole bears so striking a resemblance to

the cathedral that a detailed description of it would be superfluous.[1]

The *admiranda* are the portal of the north transept, the open arcades in front of the triforium passage, and the columns in the choir which have four slender shafts attached to their cylindrical cores. The foliage on the capitals of these columns, and also that of the attached shafts of the arches at the junction of the transepts with the choir aisles, is unusually good for its date, and, especially in the latter, recalls that on the south side of the nave of Worcester Cathedral.

A modern rood-beam, with the crucifix and its attendant figures of the Blessed Virgin and St John, spans the eastern arch of the crossing, and attached to the great north-eastern pier is a tabernacle for the Reserved Sacrament, also modern, and surmounted by a richly detailed turret and spire. Visiting the church in the afternoon, when the office of Benediction was being performed, the writer was afforded an opportunity of observing the use of this beautiful item of furniture, upon which, in mediæval and Early Renaissance times, artists lavished their utmost skill, as witness the exquisite examples preserved and in use in the churches of St Pierre and St Jacques at Louvain, St Martin at Courtrai, St Jacques at Ghent, St Leonard at Leau and St Martin at Alost.

The organ, in its richly carved case of Renaissance design, is picturesquely disposed above the arch between the transept and the south aisle of the choir,

[1] The first stone of the choir was laid in 1500 by Gilles du Bois, as we learn from the following inscription placed on the north-east pier of the transepts:—"Añ dñi MV^{c} posuit me egidi^{s} de busco pastor h^{s} ecc̄ie ipe (?) p̄hi archidue^{s} austrie max^{ā} rg^{s} rom'or^{ū} filii." More intelligibly the inscription would read thus: "A.D. MV^{c} posuit me Ægidius de Busco, pastor hujus ecclesiæ, tempore Philippi Austriæ, Maximilianæ regis Romanorum filii."

and towering up as it does into the clerestory forms a noble object. Above the high altar is a Renaissance reredos of such huge dimensions as to obscure the fine columns and arches of the apse. Within it is a picture of the Last Supper by Erasmus Quellin, a pupil of Rubens, and one of the many who, if they acquired but little distinction, are by no means unimportant from the copiousness of their works. Rubens was wont to say : " If you wish to see some of my best pictures you must go to Mechlin." His " Miraculous Draught of Fishes," painted for the Guild of Fishmongers, and considered by competent judges one of his most masterly productions, is in a chapel behind the high altar of Nôtre Dame. His excellence of colour and rivalry of the Venetian school are nowhere more conspicuous than in this picture. On the wings or shutters are painted the Tribute Money taken from the mouth of the Fish; Tobias and the Fish ; and St Peter and St Andrew. Beneath these were three small pictures, which disappeared during the French occupation, and have never been restored.

The Collegiate Church of St Michel and Ste Gudule at Brussels, built on an eminence formerly called Mont St Michel, was founded by Lambert II., Count of Lorraine, and consecrated in 1047, when the relics of Ste Gudule, which had been brought to the city by Charles of Lorraine seventy years before, were translated thither.[1]

In or about 1226 a new church on a much grander scale was begun, but only the choir with its procession path, the south transept, and the eastern side of the north transept were finished by 1275. The other portions of the north transept and the nave were in progress during the fourteenth century, and in that

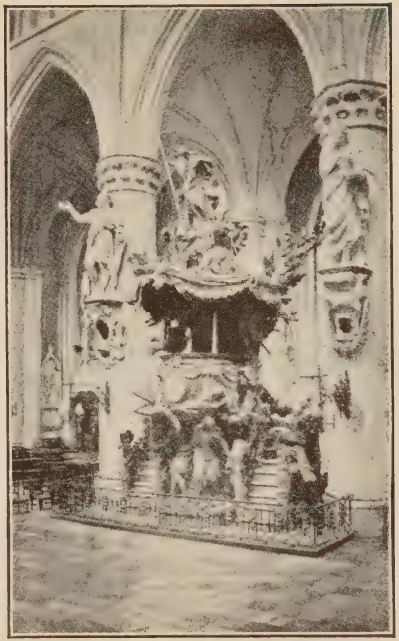
[1] Ste Gudule was a nun in the Convent of Nivelles under the Abbess Gertrude. She died in 712, and the 8th of January is yearly observed in her honour.

part of the archives of Ste Gudule preserved in the depot of the general archives of the kingdom are to be found many bulls and briefs granting plenary indulgences to persons who contributed towards the completion of the church (*sumptuoso opere fabricata*). The most ancient of these acts is a brief of the apostolic nuncio, Ambaldus, dated in the month of September 1352. By another of these archives we learn that the south aisle of the nave was in course of construction in 1398. The two western towers were not completed until the early part of the sixteenth century (*c.* 1518).

Originally the choir aisles at Ste Gudule were bordered with chapels like those of the nave, and separated from the aisles by pointed arches springing from clustered columns with *à crochet* capitals ; but in 1534 the chapels in the left aisle were removed and replaced by one large one, that of St Sacrament des Miracles, while in order to make the plan of the choir uniform, the chapels on the south side were demolished a century later and the present Chapel of the Blessed Virgin erected of the same dimensions and form as that of St Sacrament, but less ornamented than the latter—a curious instance of the longevity of the Pointed style in Belgium—and thus the plan of Ste Gudule became parallel triapsidal.

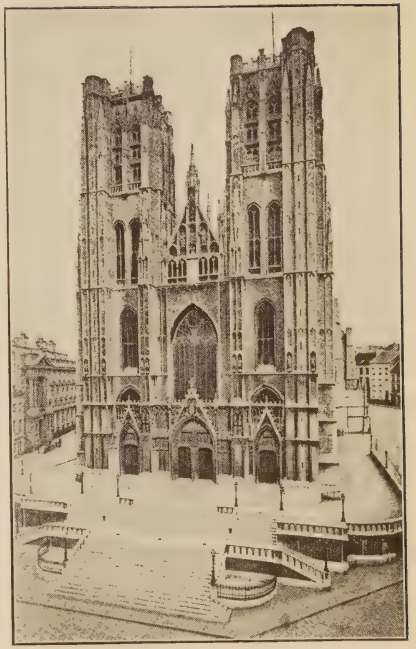
Subsequently, in 1679, the circular-domed chapel of La Madeleine was built behind the central apse in the Italian style, and on the site of the ancient Chapel of St Sacrament des Miracles, which was a hexagon.

The plan of Ste Gudule comprises a nave of eight bays, inclusive of that covered by the western towers, with aisles opening into shallow chapels formed between the buttresses ; transepts two bays in depth ; and a choir of three bays, with aisles continued round the five-sided apse. Projecting beyond the façade of either transept is an apsidal chapel commensurate in length with the choir, and com-



BRUSSELS.

The Pulpit in Ste. Gudule.



BRUSSELS.

The Western Towers of Ste. Gudule.

municating with the aisles, above which it rises very considerably.

Externally the points most worthy of attention are the western façade, one of the few in Belgium designed with a pair of western towers, which, if not so remarkable as those of Malines, Antwerp and Tongres, elicit our admiration from the beauty of their proportions;[1] the flying buttresses to the clerestory of both nave and choir; and the round-headed windows in the choir aisle between the two large chapels and the Renaissance one at the extreme east end.

The chapels on either side of the nave are contained beneath short gabled roofs, and the wall space within the pediments which surmount their variously traceried windows are relieved with a shallow panelling in the form of large trefoils. There is no central tower, but a light *flèche* rises at the intersection of the four roofs. From a historical point of view the erection of the huge chapel on either side of the choir is to be regretted, since it has deprived us of the three original ones, whose style must have formed an interesting and important link in the architecture of the church.

The earliest part of Ste Gudule, the choir, with its five-sided apse, is a vigorous, if not very graceful, specimen of early thirteenth-century work, much of its generally impressive character being due to the dark grey of its material, and to the stained glass which enriches its grandly developed clerestory. The finest cross views are to be had from the large chapel beyond either aisle.

The circular columns which carry the three arches on either side of the choir have their capitals so scantily foliaged that they can hardly be pronounced graceful. In the apse, the five stilted arches, which are crossed about midway by fillets, rise partly from

[1] Illustrated on p. 46.

coupled pillars, of the same shape as those in the choir, and partly from corbels introduced at the junction of the pillars. Similar corbels are affixed to the pillars both in the choir and apse on the sides of them facing the aisles and procession path to assist in carrying the groining ribs of those portions.

The triforium is very noble. In the choir each bay presents three pointed arches on rather thick circular shafts enclosing two lesser openings, the space between being relieved with a small circle, which, as well as the arcades, is devoid of cusping. In the apse there are only two openings in each bay of the triforium.

A much greater development is perceptible in the style of the clerestory, which, not only here, but in other parts of the church, forms one of its grandest and most imposing features. The windows in the clerestory of the choir completely fill the several bays assigned to them, are uniform in design, and made up of three windows of two trefoiled compartments, with a small quatrefoil above each pair of lights, while three larger quatrefoils compose the tracery which fills the space between the heads of those six lights and the arch comprising them. These six windows in the clerestory of the choir at Ste Gudule are some of the finest and purest specimens of early Belgian tracery. They are genuine and noble examples, and quite free from any tinge of the faults of later examples, and worthy of comparison with the best of our own early traceries.

In their original state it is probable that the five windows in the clerestory of the apse were of two lights each, with geometrical tracery of the same bold character as those just described, but altered at a later period to their present three-light form, with rather thin mullions and curvilinear tracery.

On the eastern side of either transept the clerestory windows are similar in design to those in the choir ;

on the western sides, and throughout the nave, they are of six lights, surmounted by one large circle filled with tracery, and on the whole recall those in the clerestory of the nave of York Minster.

The triforium and arcades of the nave do not call for a very minute description. The former consists merely of six square-headed openings in each bay, the mullions dividing them corresponding to those of the clerestory, from which the triforium is separated by a string-course. The latter are of the usual Flemish type, the pointed arches being well moulded, and the columns, equipped with statues of the apostles on very large *culs de lampe* or brackets, are massy cylindrical ones on circular bases, and enriched as to their capitals with two rows of bold leafage.

The immense windows which light the west end of the nave and the façades of the transepts have rather thin mullions and geometrical tracery, arranged in not very graceful patterns, and are all filled with stained glass of the first half of the sixteenth century, the subjects being spread through the lights regardless of the mullions.

The finest of this glass is in the transept windows. That in the northern one, from the designs of Bernard Van Orley, represents the donor, the Emperor Charles V., attended by his patron Charlemagne bearing the sword and orb of sovereignty. Behind him is his wife, Isabella, with her patroness, Elizabeth of Hungary, holding the crown. In the opposite window, also by Van Orley, are King Louis of Hungary, kneeling in adoration of the Holy Trinity, with his wife, Marie, sister of Charles V., and their patron saints, Louis of France and the Blessed Virgin. The stained glass in the west window, from the designs of Franz Floris, and representing the Last Judgment, was inserted in 1528, but has undergone several restorations. Somewhat later is the

glass in the five windows of the apse, which contain portraits of Maximilian of Austria, and his queen, Mary of Burgundy ; their son, Philippe le Bel, and his queen, Johanna the Maid of Castile ; the Emperor Charles V., and his brother, Ferdinand ; Philip II., son of Charles V., with his second wife, Maria of Portugal ; and Philibert, Duke of Savoy, and Margaret of Austria, all attended by their patron saints.

In the earliest and most interesting part of the church, the choir aisles at the part where they follow the bend of the apse, some singular, rather than elegant windows demand attention.

They are examples of what is termed plate tracery, and their heads are round instead of pointed. Each window has two pointed lights, which, in order to accommodate a large sexfoiled circle, rise from slender shafts, with foliaged capitals placed at a considerable distance below the spring of the round-headed containing arch, which is carried upon small shafts resting upon the capitals of those supporting the two pointed lights. The same kind of window occurs in the apse of Nôtre Dame de la Chapelle, which was begun some years earlier than the choir of Ste Gudule, but the model does not seem to have been imitated elsewhere than in Ste Gudule.

The large chapel which adjoins the choir on its north side was built between 1534 and 1539 to contain the Miraculous Wafers, which had previously been kept in a smaller chapel built out at the east end of the church towards the close of the fourteenth century, and reconstructed in its present Italian form in 1679.

The story of these Miraculous Wafers is one of the many similar tales invented by those who took advantage of the superstition of the age, and the general hatred of the race of Israel, to incite the populace to deeds of cruelty, which enabled them to

enrich themselves with the confiscated goods of the unbelievers.

It appears that in the year 1369 a Jew, named Jonathan, who resided in the little town of Enghien, prevailed upon one of his brethren, John of Louvain, a pretended convert to Christianity, to procure for him some of the consecrated wafers used to communicate the faithful with in the service of the Mass.

The promise of sixty gold angels overcame the fears and scruples of the apostate, and one dark stormy night in the month of October he succeeded in stealing from the church of Ste Catherine at Brussels the ciborium containing sixteen of these mysterious wafers. Soon afterwards Jonathan was murdered in his own garden, and his wife removed to the metropolis, carefully taking with her the stolen pyx.

On Good Friday, a number of Jews being assembled in their synagogue, which stood opposite the Hôtel Dieu, the wafers were thrown upon a table, and subjected to a thousand insults. Some even went so far as to pierce them with their knives, when, behold, blood gushed from the impious wounds, and at the sight of the prodigy many of the unholy dogs fell to the ground in speechless terror. To make a long story short, the perpetrators of the sacrilege were discovered by means of a second miracle, and, being convicted on their own confession—extorted, be it said, by the torture—they were burned alive, their goods confiscated, and their brethren of the Jewish persuasion banished from the province.

This chapel, which bears the dedication to St Sacrament des Miracles, is a rich but not exuberant specimen of Flamboyant Gothic. It is four bays in length, and terminates in an apse of three sides, formed by including the last bay on either hand so as to meet the eastern wall.

The arches separating this chapel from the north aisle of the choir are carried upon tall clustered pillars resembling those in Exeter Cathedral, and support a clerestory of gracefully traceried windows, whose effect is considerably enhanced by the depth of their arch mouldings which rise from receding shafts.

The pillars, as well as the spaces between the four great windows opposite, are adorned with tabernacle work of the richest and most delicate character, and the groining ribs of the elliptical roof ramify so as to form a variety in the patterns of the spaces, which are filled in with red brick.

The stained glass which fills the four great windows on the north side of the chapel was inserted between 1540 and 1547 from the designs of Michael Coxie and Bernard Van Orley. Each window was the gift of one of the most powerful Catholic potentates of Europe at that period, and bears the portrait of its donor with his queen and their patron saints. In the first window, beginning at the west end of the chapel, are, John III. of Portugal and his queen, Catherine, a sister of Charles V.; in the second, Louis of Hungary and his queen, Maria, another sister of Charles V.; in the third, Francis I. of France and his queen, Eleanora, a third sister of Charles V.; and in the fourth, Ferdinand I. of Austria and his queen. Above each group of figures an incident in the story of the Stolen Hosts is represented—the Bribery, the Hosts insulted in the Synagogue, the Attack on the Jews (presumably), and the Denunciation of the Jews.

The groups of sovereigns with their patron saints, which spread themselves through the entire width of the windows, are placed under open porches or in colonnaded covered galleries in the style of the Renaissance, recalling a little some of the more decorative features of Veronese and Tintoretto, or the allegorical pageants of Rubens.

A fair and accessible illustration of the designer's treatment may be derived from the Tudor and Stuart monuments in Henry the Seventh's Chapel at Westminster. The open ground within the architecture is filled in with considerable masses of pale blue, of a lilac tone. There is no vestige of anything like a background, so called, neither tree, nor building, nor distant object—all flat pale blue. This groundwork was restored, some eighty years ago, in exact imitation, it was said, of the old; that it is nearly like it there is no reason to doubt; but the old would be more broken in tint, for this is indeed flat to excess. Each group occupies something less than a third of the whole of the window, exclusive of the tracery, which, as well as the points of the openings above the canopies, is filled in with white quarry-work, with some heraldry and spots of coloured decoration. The whole effect of these windows is bright and light, which goes far to redeem a very exceptionable character of design. The only part that can be said to have any power of shadow is the ceilings of the canopies, and there it is light in tint, but the extent of flatness makes it noticeable as shadow. They are relieved a little by coloured festoons, pendants and open ornaments. For the rest, shading is nowhere remarkable. The whole of the four windows are as light, and even lighter, than Late Perpendicular windows are generally, and as compared with works of their own date one would say they were light to exception; white and yellow form at least three-fourths of the entire surface, and so little is contrast of colour a feature of them, that blue, only a tint or two deeper than the ground, is much used, and in large pieces against it; then cool purples, some warm light purples, some light greens, and ruby in small quantities. The ruby, where it is used, looks harsh, partly from its being rather dark in tincture, but chiefly because the other

colours are harmonised to a cool tone, and the red contrasts unpleasantly. The drawing is very good, both of the figures and the architecture—especially of the latter ; the action of the figures and the expression good, too ; the style of painting free, yet careful ; the faces and hands are on white glass, slightly tinted. Perhaps the best window is the third from the transept : the group of Francis I. and his queen, with their patron saints behind ; the figures are simply arranged, and on a single plane, unless a figure kneeling in front of another standing can be called foreground and background. All is light and glassy, with the exception of the shaded ceilings, though even there the glass is not lost ; still the shaded roof and the careful perspective give an appearance of positive recess, which the most partial would allow to be highly injurious to the building at least ; the effect being to lead the eye outside and at right angles from the altar in a narrow chapel, with the windows on one side only ; this surely to any sensitive eye cannot but be most distracting, and would have been avoided had the work been kept within those rules of low relief which are alone suitable to glass in its relation to architecture.

No more instructive lecture to a glass painter whose judgment had been tolerably grounded by study of the fine works of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries could be read than in these windows of the St Sacrament Chapel at Ste Gudule. Then let him turn to the corresponding ones in the Lady Chapel opposite, and he will have seen the germ of the tree—the first introduction of false taste, and the rank magnitude of its full-blown excrescence. Those in the Chapel of the Sacrament have a silvery brilliance and sweetness of effect, which, in spite of the preponderance of the architectural accompaniment, stamp them genuine and fine works ; but the recessed roofs and elaborate perspective clearly

indicate the rock on which the opposite artist has split, who, in the Lady Chapel, goes off amain, thrusts up enormous piles of opaque architecture that make the cathedral itself look fragile and slight. Despising balance, he aims at being striking and picturesque, sends off receding terraces and mighty ascending steps, and settles his groups into corners, with huge rolling masses of shadow measurable by square yards. Here, indeed, force of shadow has been tried with astounding success—there is scarcely a piece of clear glass or of pot metal colour in all the four ; but those who can admire such things in glass must be left to themselves, for it is impossible in looking at them to command patience enough to be critical.

"In these windows," remarks an eminent authority, "the defect of opacity reaches probably its greatest depth. They are designed absolutely regardless of any consideration of glass or architecture. Each window is treated as a vast oil picture, without so much as a frame. Here is no vista of distant architecture, nor any such relief of lighter colour as you find at Gouda. Force of colour is sought by masses of deep shadow, into which the figures merge. This shadow being obtained by paint, and the glazing being in the now usual squares, there are literally yards of painted quarries, which, except when the sun is at its fiercest, are all but black. And withal the effect is not rich as compared with even the common rolled glass, though it is not without a certain picturesqueness when, perchance, the sun struggles through. A painter might find it an admirable background to his picture ; no architect would choose it for his building."

Three of these windows are said to have been designed by a pupil of Rubens, Van Thulden, and have internal evidence sufficient to prove them of his school, but they are entirely bad as glass, and

moreover, illustrate the evil effect to be feared even at the hands of clever artists, when the principles and purposes of an art are forgotten; here the beauty of the material is despised, and the composition and effect made an outrage to the architecture that affords them a position.

On the other hand, the windows in the Chapel of the Sacrament deserve attention from every student of glass-painting, being fine in themselves and a point in the history of the art, but that they might prove dangerous and delusive as models, were it not for the warning supplied by the extravagant errors in the opposite Chapel of Nôtre Dame de Déliverance.

The stained glass in the six-light window at the east end of the Chapel of St Sacrament was inserted about eighty years ago by Capronnier, from the designs of Navez. At the same time a Gothic altar and reredos by Goyers were substituted for the pseudo-Classical ones which existed when Thomas Allom, a talented architectural draughtsman of the early Victorian era, made his drawing of this chapel for one of those serial publications which depended for their success on the excellencce of their illustrations rather than on the descriptive letterpress.

Nôtre Dame de la Chapelle derives its name from its having been a simple oratory, the foundation stone of which was laid by Godefroid-le-Barbu, Duke of Brabant, in 1134. The patronage of this chapel, which was built outside the walls of Brussels, was conferred by the founder on the Abbey of St Sépulchre at Cambrai. Very early in the thirteenth century this chapel was raised to the dignity of a parish church, and about 1216 the existing choir and transept were built, portions of the old twelfth-century building being incorporated in the new structure. Between 1421 and 1428 the nave was rebuilt on its present grandiose scale, the choir and transepts, which are valuable as specimens of the

transitional and Early Pointed periods of architecture so rare in the cities of Brabant, being happily left.

The church thus presents an interesting variety of styles, the crossing and the transepts being an admixture of Romanesque and First Pointed, the aisleless aspidal choir entirely First Pointed, and the nave a very fair specimen of fifteenth-century work.

Originally there was a central tower, but when the present nave was built the upper part of this tower was taken down, the lower made to range in height with the new clerestory, and one long line of roof carried along the whole.

The south transept and the choir are the most interesting portions of Nôtre Dame de la Chapelle externally, but their true dimensions appear dwarfed by the nave, whose aisle walls reach to the spring of the transept gable.

The choir and its pentagonal east end are lighted by ten windows, resembling those in the apse of Ste Gudule. Each has two pointed lights, with a large sexfoiled circle in the space between them and the round-headed containing arch. Viewed as a whole, this series of windows is one of much elegance, and had the pointed instead of the semicircular arch been employed might have rivalled some of the best contemporary work of the kind in France.

In the south transept, the Romanesque work has a German character. The ground storey of the façade is pierced with a round-headed portal, having receding shafts and some sculpture in the tympanum above the square doorway. Above this are three rather tall, round-arched compartments; the centre one, which is wider than that on either side of it, has had a window inserted with tracery similar to that in those of the choir. In the gable above are three round-headed arcades. Part of the eastern side of this transept is occupied by a short square-ended chapel whose sloping roof forms a continuation of

that covering the transept. The east and south sides of this little chapel are richly arcaded, and the angle formed by it with the short piece of walling in the eastern side of the transept is lighted by a long, round-headed window corresponding with the recesses in the second stage of the façade.

The old central tower, which now forms a continuation of the nave clerestory, is very severe, thin strips of masonry dividing its side into three compartments destitute of windows or arcading, and the nave roof, which, as already mentioned, is carried over it, terminates on its eastern side in a hipped gable.

The present tower, not a particularly remarkable production, is placed at the west end of the nave, above whose roof its stone portion only just rises. By way of finish this tower has a louvred belfry in the shape of an elongated octagon, with a sloping roof, which merges into a square turret crowned by a cupola with curved sides.

The aisles, with their flanking chapels, are carried out to the full length of the transepts, are continued along the sides of the tower, and have separately gabled roofs. There are six windows in either aisle, and as each window lights a chapel it is surmounted by a triangular pediment relieved as to its surface with three pointed openings, and joined to the main roof by a short one gabling out of it. Between each pediment is a pinnacle, whose appearance would be more satisfactory were it connected with a buttress. As it is, the bald space between each window contrasts by no means favourably with the richness of the gables and their intermediate crocketed pinnacles.

Another striking contrast, but a more agreeable one, is presented on entering the church by the lightsome fifteenth-century nave, and the dim, comparatively low, transepts and choir.

In the latter there is a considerable wall space below

the windows, which are rather deeply recessed, and filled with modern stained glass in the mosaic style.

Between each window is an internal buttress pierced with an arch so as to admit of a continuous passage along the top of the aforesaid wall, and attached to these buttresses are the shafts supporting the annulated groining ribs of the vault, which is filled in with red brick. Colour and gilding has been lavishly bestowed upon the walls, shafts and groining ribs of this most elegant specimen of early thirteenth-century work, so that its appearance is one of much gorgeousness.

The arches which carry the old central tower are semicircular and rise from pilasters, slender cylindrical shafts being introduced into the angles formed by them to support the ribs of the vaulting.

Passing into the nave, the wall space above the arch opening from it into the crossing will be remarked. This wall space is in reality the western side of the old central tower, which, it will be remembered, was allowed to remain at the building of the nave in the fifteenth century. Harmoniously proportioned, and divided from its aisles by the regulation series of circular columns with wreathed capitals, the nave of Nôtre Dame de la Chapelle is vaulted in red brick, as are the aisles and their flanking chapels, of which those on the south side are deeper than those on the north.

There is no triforium, but over each bay of the nave arcade is a pierced parapet which does duty for that stage of the elevation. In the clerestory windows geometrical and flowing patterns are pretty equally employed for the tracery, but in those lighting the chapels the design is the uniform one of a large traceried circle, similar to that in the clerestory of the nave at Ste Gudule.

Very noble clusters of shafts form the piers sup-

porting the arch which opens into the nave from the tower, to the full height of the church, and produces a remarkable fine effect when viewed from the east end. The roof beneath the tower is groined in red brick, and arches of the same height as those in the nave open from this space into the aisles and chapels on either hand.

In the northern transept the manner in which some of its Romanesque features were retained when the great alterations of the early part of the thirteenth century took place may be studied on the interior of its façade, where the windows are lancets inserted within round-headed arches supported by slender shafts. The eastern wall of this transept was disturbed in Late Gothic times by piercing it with two arches so as to afford entrance to a chapel of little architectural merit or interest. Commensurate in breadth with the eastern side of the transept, and in length with the choir, whose north side it closely adjoins, this chapel is groined in brick and terminates in a three-sided apse.

The third mediæval church to be noticed in Brussels is that of Nôtre Dame des Victoires du Sablon, an imposing Late Gothic structure, which originated in a small chapel built in 1304 by the Corporation of Archers to commemorate the victory gained in 1288 at the battle of Woeringen by Duke John I. of Brabant over the Court of Guelders and the Archbishop of Cologne.

During the second half of the fourteenth century the foundations of the present great church were laid on the site of this chapel, but the northern portal had alone been finished when the works appear to have been suspended and not resumed until late in the fifteenth century.

The ground plan is that cruciform one almost invariably adopted in the important town churches of Belgium, and presents no departures from established

BRUSSELS.

Notre Dame des Victoires, from the South-West.

usage worthy of note except at the west end of the nave, which, viewed externally, appears to be divided, both as regards its aisles and clerestory, into seven compartments, each pierced with a very fine flamboyantly traceried window. On entering the church, however, the nave arcade is found to consist only of five bays, the two westernly bays being thrown into one and marked off from the remainder by an arch, which, spanning the church transversely, and rising to its full height, opens into a space that was, in all probability, to be surmounted by a tower; but unless the massive turrets flanking the west front be taken as indications, there is nothing on the exterior of the church to denote that such a structure was ever contemplated.

The accompanying illustration of Nôtre Dame des Victoires shows the deeply recessed western portal, the exquisitely traceried window above it, and the treatment of the roof over the richly buttressed double aisles, thus precluding the necessity of a detailed description.

The façade of the south transept, whose gable, like that of the western one, has never been completed, exhibits that rare feature in the architecture of the Low Countries, a rose window, which, although a very graceful work of its kind, cannot compete in dimensions with those of France. Its tracery is partly of the geometrical and partly of the curvilinear kind, and radiates from a foliated circle. The porch below is the earliest part of the church, and dates from about 1410, and is the finest of all the Brussels portals. Canopied niches for statuary fringe its outer arch, and also occupy the three orders of mouldings within, while in the tympanum above the two doorways, which have square heads rounded off at the angles, is a spirally canopied tabernacle flanked by niches of a simpler character.

The choir, imposing from its great loftiness, has

no aisles, and terminates in a five-sided apse with extremely tall windows of two compartments. Between each bay of the choir and apse a well-graduated buttress, surmounted by a pinnacle, gives an air of stability to this part of the church, which, without such supports, would present a somewhat fragile and wire-drawn appearance.

Nôtre Dame des Victoires is remarkable as being one of the few churches in Belgium planned with double aisles on either side of the nave. Here, although altarpieces have been erected across them at intervals of two bays, the outer aisles, which it should be remarked do not open into the transepts, were never partitioned off into a series of single chapels by walls. The result is that the views across the church are not only more extensive than usual, but more picturesque, from the presence of an additional series of isolated columns and arches, similar to those at Antwerp and Louvain, where the arch mouldings are carried down, without the intervention of a capital, to the bases of the pillars. The westernmost bay of the nave, the great arch spanning the nave between it and the five remaining bays, and those which open from the crossing into the transepts and choir, are also of this type, but the five arches on either side of the nave rise from tall circular columns with carved capitals.

In this church the figures of the apostles, which, as a rule, are affixed to the columns, occupy the spandrels of the arches.

They are of very good seventeenth-century workmanship, and the boldly foliaged brackets upon which they stand bear inscriptions setting forth the fact that these statues were the gifts of individuals.[1] The tablet within the bracket supporting the figure of St Simon is inscribed thus :

[1] Some of these brackets are figured by M. Van Ysendyck in his "Documents classés de l'art dans les Pays Bas"

"Bernardinus Manganoni dit Simon Camarata, at fait mettre cet apostre, avec ses armes et sa sepulture ici pour sa famille cet 17 Aoust 1654."

The internal proportions of Nôtre Dame des Victoires, although still retaining its coating of whitewash, are harmonious and pleasing, the triforium being made an important feature in the elevation of the nave. The mullions of the five arcades composing it are crossed at mid-height by a transom, below which the openings are filled with tracery, whereby an air of greater solidity, allied with grace, is secured.

There is much good modern stained glass. Each tall window of the apse has two tiers of single figures under spiral canopies. In the five-light windows of the aisles, the same treatment has been pursued, but with one row of figures; the tinctures are rich and brilliant, and the effect of the whole work is excellent from its uniformity, and its agreement with the architecture.

In the glass which has been placed in the beautiful west window since the restoration of its stonework, the unconventional arrangement of placing figures and armorial work upon a groundwork of quarries unencumbered with canopies and other architectural accessories has been adopted, with the result that that jewel-like effect observable in English work of the latter part of the fifteenth century has been successfully attained. It is to be hoped that when the time arrives for giving the clerestory windows in Nôtre Dame des Victoires their complement of stained glass, the same treatment will be pursued.

CHAPTER VI

ANTWERP, LOUVAIN, AND AERSCHOT

Byzantium—Venice—Antwerp, these are the centres around which the modern world has revolved, for we must include its commercial with its social progress, and with those interests which develop with society.

Indeed, the development of the arts has always run concurrently with commerce. One could wish to add that the converse were equally true.

Antwerp—the city on the wharf—became famous at the beginning of the sixteenth century under the reign of the enterprising Charles V. "Antwerp was then truly a leading city in almost all things, but in commerce it headed all the cities of the world," says an old chronicler. Bruges, the great banking centre, yielded her position, and the Hanseatic merchants removed to the banks of the Scheldt. "I was astonished, and wondered much when I beheld Antwerp," wrote an envoy of the Italian Republic, "for I saw Venice outdone." In what direction Venice was outdone is not recorded. Not in her architecture, at least; scarcely in her painting. We cannot concede a Tintoretto for a Rubens. Yet, as Antwerp was the home of Matsys, of Rubens, Van Dyck, and the Teniers, the home also of Christopher Plantin, the great printer, her glory is not to be sought in trade alone. She is still remembered as a mother of art and letters, while her mercantile pre-eminence belongs to a buried past.

It must, however, be confessed that the fortunes of Antwerp as a city, prospering in its connection with the Hanseatic League, were anything but advantageous to the student of architectural history. Alterations and rebuildings were the order of the day, and so lavish were the means devoted to the work that scarcely a vestige of architecture in the city remains of earlier date than the fourteenth century.

The grandly dimensioned churches raised in every parish afford ample evidence of the zeal and skill with which the work of reconstruction was prosecuted, and as specimens of the style of their day cannot fail to elicit our admiration by the nobility of their proportions, so that in the monuments the wealthy burghers of Antwerp have left us we have perhaps no reason to regret their zeal.

At the same time, one is tempted to wish that they had spared the works of earlier date by raising their new ones on fresh ground, instead of such wholesale demolition of the labours of preceding generations.

Nôtre Dame at Antwerp, the most spacious church in the Netherlands, originated in a chapel built for a miraculous image of the Blessed Virgin.

This chapel was reconstructed in 1124, when the canons of St Michel, having ceded their church to the Præmonstratensians, removed hither. The high altar was consecrated by Burchardus, Bishop of Cambrai, that same year, as recorded in the following stanza :—

> "Undecies centum ductis, et sex quater annis
> Virginis a partu conciliante reum,
> Burchardus Præsul hac atria nec minus aram
> Sacravit, medium, quod tenet Ecclesia."

Two centuries later, the canons of St Michel, animated by the prevailing spirit, determined on

rebuilding their church on a more magnificent scale, and they commenced the work in 1352 by laying the foundations for a new choir. But slow progress was made with this great undertaking, more than two centuries and a half elapsing before the church assumed that form with which we are familiar to-day.

In 1520, the chapter, dissatisfied with its choir, started upon the erection of a new one, the first stone of which was laid in the following year by the Emperor Charles V., accompanied by King Christian II. of Denmark and a numerous retinue.

The new plan included a crypt, partly above ground (probably like that we see in St Paul's in the same town), and the works were progressing when, in 1533, a disastrous fire did such damage to the western parts of the church that the work of enlargement was suspended, and the funds destined for its employment were applied to restoring the damaged portions. Had the design been realised, the eastern limb of the church would have been doubled in size.

As regards its dimensions, Nôtre Dame at Antwerp is one of the most remarkable churches in Europe, being nearly 400 feet long by 170 feet in width across the nave, which, inclusive of that covered by the western towers, has seven bays, and three aisles on either side. This multiplication of aisles gives a vast intricacy and picturesqueness to the cross views of the interior ; but there is a poverty of detail, and a want of harmony among the parts, and of subordination and proportion, sadly destructive of true architectural effect ; so that, notwithstanding its size, it looks much smaller internally than many of the French cathedrals of far less dimensions. If there had been ten bays in the nave instead of only seven, and the central division had been at least ten feet wider, which could easily have been spared from the outermost aisles, the apparent size of the church

ANTWERP.

Notre Dame.

would have been much greater. The outermost south aisle is wider than the nave, and equal in breadth to the two inner aisles; the northernmost aisle is not quite so broad.

The transepts have no aisles, but they are continued beyond the line of the nave aisles, so that they are more than usually elongated. The two inner aisles of the nave open into the transepts, but the outer ones, which, it should be remarked, are continuous, and not divided into a series of chapels, are walled up at their eastern extremities.

The choir consists of three bays, but has only one aisle on either side. This is continued round the apse, and five pentagonal chapels radiate from it. Three chapels flank the north aisle of the choir, the first two opening, as does the north transept, into one large chapel of the same breadth as the southernmost aisle of the nave.

The chapel in the third bay of the choir communicates with another, not quite so wide as the one just alluded to, and from which it is cut off by a wall. On the south side of the choir are three chapels, the area beyond them being occupied by the sacristies.

The façade is flanked by towers equal in width to the two inner aisles of the nave. The northern one has alone been completed, and although it may seem to a severe judgment to possess some of the defects of the Late Flemish style, it is rivalled for beauty of outline only by the Flamboyant steeples of Chartres and Vienna. As might be expected from its late age—it was not finished until 1530—this north-western spire of Nôtre Dame at Antwerp exhibits some extravagances in design and detail, but the mode in which the octagonal lantern of open-work bisects the faces of the solid square portion with its alternate angles, thus breaking the outline without any harsh or disagreeable transition, is very masterly, while the bold pinnacles, with their

flying buttresses, which group around it, produce a most pleasing variety, the whole serving to indicate the appearance the steeple of Malines would have presented had it been completed according to the original design.

The treatment of the lantern at the junction of the nave and choir with the transepts is, externally at least, more curious than beautiful. Rising pagoda-like in three low storeys, diminishing in size as they ascend, is an octagonal cupola capped with what is said to be one of the earliest examples of that bulb-shaped spire so frequently met with in the ecclesiology of the Netherlands. As these three stages rise almost directly from the arches of the crossing without a substructure sufficiently high for the grandly pitched roofs to rest against, the latter, in order not to conceal any portion of the cupola, are hipped in the most ungraceful manner. The result is that the cupola, by no means an unfavourable piece of Early Renaissance work, has a very mean appearance and looks as though it were striving to emerge from a chasm made by cutting off a considerable portion of the four roofs.

If size were any real test of beauty, the interior of Nôtre Dame at Antwerp ought to be one of the finest in Belgium. Unfortunately, although it was begun at a time when the Pointed style had reached the full maturity of perfection, a colder and more unimpressive design than is here carried out it would be difficult to find. Still, notwithstanding the long period that elapsed between its commencement and completion, there is a congruity about the whole building which is eminently pleasing, and to some extent redeems the defects in its details and proportions, while the views afforded in various directions by the triple aisles on either side of the nave are undeniably picturesque.

Throughout the interior, the mouldings of the

ANTWERP

THE CATHEDRAL AND ROADSTEAD FROM THE TÊTE DE FLANDRE

From a water-colour painting by J. Pennell

arches are carried down uninterruptedly to the bases of the columns ; the spandrels of the arches facing the nave and choir are relieved with Perpendicular panelling, whose superficial appearance may be attributed to the successive coats of paint with which the stonework, not only here, but in every part of the church, has been overlaid. Were this removed, the true colour of the material exposed, and the simple quadripartite vaulting, which is no doubt of red brick, cleared of its plaster, the *ensemble* of the interior would not only be vastly improved, but would present a very different appearance.

We miss, too, the triforium, which gives such dignity to the elevations at Malines, Louvain, and other great Late Gothic interiors. At Antwerp it is reduced to a mere passage above the pier arches, defended by a pierced parapet along the bottom of the tall clerestory windows, whose tracery is for the most part modern, as from descriptions of the church written during the latter part of the eighteenth and the commencement of the last century, they appear to have been deprived of it.

The mediæval rood-loft was destroyed in 1566, when the church was sacked by the fanatic Gueux, who demolished its richly sculptured altars and retabula, and broke most of the stained glass and ornaments about the place ; a few specimens of the glass escaped and may be seen in various parts of the church, in many cases incorporated with modern work.

When Catholic worship was restored at Antwerp a new rood-loft was built in the Renaissance style. A representation of it is still preserved in a picture of the interior of Nôtre Dame by Pieter Neefs at Bicton House, near Sidmouth, the seat of the Rolle family. Such an authority as Neefs is important, as, when the church was refitted, all feeling for Pointed design had been superseded by Italian ; still, change

of detail had not then produced change of sentiment, and Catholic tradition survived all changes of form and ornament.

This rood-loft, which is mentioned by James Essex in his "Journal of a Tour through part of Flanders and France in 1773," as being "supported by a fine arcade with Collums of various coloured marbles," was removed during the early forties of the last century, together with most of the Renaissance furniture.

The modern notion that we ought to see the whole of a building, or of a work of art, at one glance has undoubtedly had much to do with the throwing open of cathedral choirs; but such an idea is destructive to the fundamental principles of mediæval architecture. Mystery, subdivision and partial concealment are essential elements in a Gothic building, and directly they are done away with, the style is robbed of its poetry and ceases to charm us.

The stalls which fill the first two bays of the choir on either side were erected between 1844 and 1847. Some of their details are deserving of praise, but they were designed in utter contradiction to ecclesiastical tradition. Half way between each range of stalls are two enormous canopies, which, at first sight, seem to indicate the seat of some dignitary. A closer inspection shows that these canopies, which effectually conceal the pillars between the first and second arches of the choir, project only over a vacant space by which the stalls are ascended, and are simply placed there as a vehicle for exhibiting a great assemblage of pinnacles and buttresses, and expending a sum of money, unhappily, that would have half built that rood-screen for which a church of such dimensions as Nôtre Dame so loudly exclaims, and which it certainly deserves, whatever its rank.

Better would it have been for the choir had the arches been filled with open screens of metal, like those in the Marien Kirche at Lübeck, and an open

rood-loft placed across the eastern arch of the lantern. At present the choir of Nôtre Dame at Antwerp is neither one thing nor the other, and the crowding of its area with chairs is very detrimental to its dignity.

It was not until about 1860 that these stalls received their final completion, by the hand of the distinguished Louvain sculptor, Geerts, of those elaborate and beautifully executed groups and statuettes which so justly command the admiration of visitors. The former are placed, not in the pediments, but just above the stalls themselves, at the springing of the upper part, while the latter divide each successive portion of the desks into its respective stall space. The addition of this rich and copious imagery has to a great extent removed the starved appearance which the stallwork had in its unadorned condition; indeed, it is not too much to say that, in its completed state, it is one of the most sumptuous existing monuments of the revival of mediæval art to be met with on the Continent.

The high altarpiece, placed on the chord of the apse, is a noble and sumptuous example of Early Renaissance taste and workmanship, but, like the stallwork, its dimensions are such as to diminish the scale of the choir, the five arches opening to the procession path being completely obscured by it.

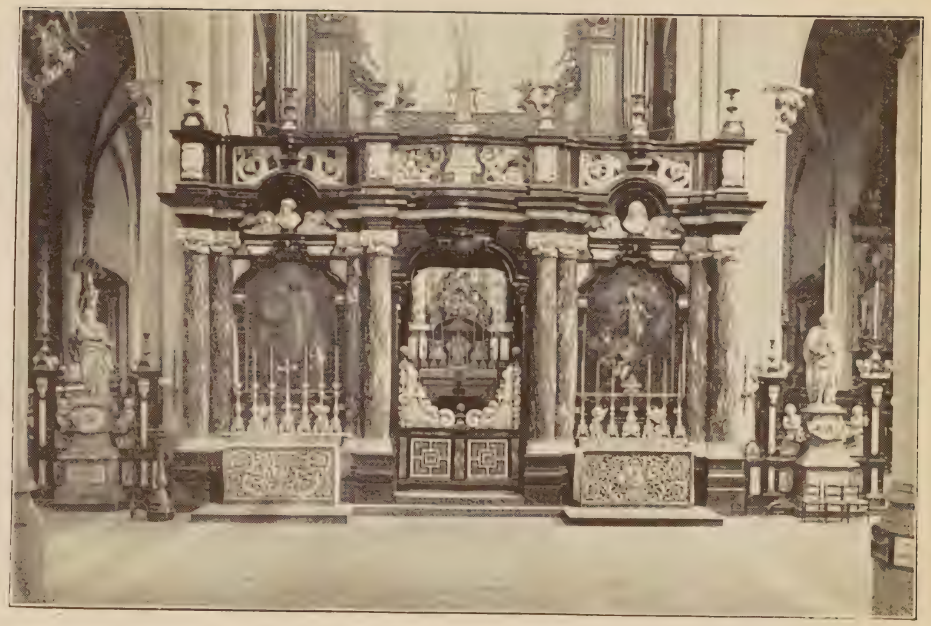
Of the numerous creations of Rubens' pencil none perhaps more thoroughly declares to us his comprehension of religious decorative art than the Assumption which fills the arched compartment in the lower portion of this altarpiece. It was finished in 1625, and, of twenty repetitions of the subject, is the only example still preserved at the place it was intended by the painter to occupy. In spirit we are reminded of Titian's Assumption in the cathedral at Verona, but Rubens' proves perhaps a higher conception of the subject. The work is seen a considerable way off, and every outline is bathed in

light, so that the Virgin is elevated to dazzling glory with a power of ascension scarcely, if ever, attained by any master.

In the celebrated "Descent from the Cross," which hangs in the south transept, the boldness of the composition, the energy in the characters, the striking attitudes and grouping, the glowing, vigorous colouring, are astonishing proofs of Rubens' power. The circumstances which gave rise to this wondrous effort of art are interesting.

It is said that Rubens, in laying the foundations of his villa near Antwerp, had unwittingly infringed on some ground belonging to the Company of Gunsmiths (arquebusiers). A law suit was threatened, and Rubens prepared to defend it, but, being assured by one of the greatest lawyers of the city that the right lay with his opponents, he immediately drew back, and offered to paint a picture by way of recompense. The offer was accepted, and the company required a representation of its patron saint (St Christopher) to be placed in its chapel in the cathedral, which at that time Nôtre Dame was. Rubens, with his usual liberality and magnificence, presented to his adversaries, not merely a single representation of the saint, but an elaborate illustration of his name (The Christ-bearing).[1] The arquebusiers were at first disappointed not to have their saint represented in the usual manner, and Rubens was obliged to enter into an explanation of his work. Thus, without knowing

[1] The pictures form a triptych: The doors, when closed, represent St Christopher himself bearing the Infant Saviour on his shoulders guided by the light of a hermit's lantern. On the insides of the doors are, the Salutation of Mary and Elizabeth (the Virgin bearing Christ before his Nativity), and the Presentation in the Temple, wherein the priest Simeon, as another Christopher, is depicted as bearing the Light to lighten the Gentiles high in his arms, and looking upwards; while in the great central subject certain of the figures have a share in bearing the Crucified.



ANTWERP.

The Screen in St. Jacques.

it, they had received in exchange for a few feet of land a treasure which neither money nor lands can now purchase.

The painting was executed by Rubens soon after his seven years' residence in Italy, and while the impression made by the work of Titian and Paul Veronese were yet fresh in his mind. The great master appeared in the fulness of his glory in this work—it is one of the few which exhibits in combination all that nature had given him of warmth and imagination with all that he had acquired of knowledge, judgment and method, and in which he may be considered fully to have overcome the difficulties of a subject which becomes painful, and almost repulsive, when it ceases to be sublime.

When, in viewing this splendid work, the mind can descend to details, from the first grand impression it cannot fail to make, new beauties and perfections are discovered, and the only employment of the informed judgment is to sanction the feeling which the first impression created.

As the attention is directed in succession to the principal figures, that of Our Lord claims the strongest admiration. Death can hardly be more touchingly exhibited than in that pale, drooping and blood-stained body.

Then our notice descends to the natural action of all the characters, and the vivid expression of their love and grief. When we proceed to examine the structure and execution of this splendid work, we find that a single pyramidal group exhibits around Our Lord, upon a somewhat circular base, the three Maries and five of the disciples, all occupied in the same action. Two of the disciples, mounted upon the cross, let down the Sacred Body, which descends in an inclined posture, one of the disciples having just relinquished the hold which the other retains. Joseph of Arimathea, a little less elevated

than these two disciples, supports the declining body under the arms; while the beloved disciple, placed on the ground, receives in his arms the descending corpse of his Lord. The Virgin, full of tears and weakened by her sorrows, raises the maternal hands which nursed Him when a child, and seems to seek one last consolation in embracing what remains of her Son and Lord.

The obscurity of the horizon announces the sympathy of nature; while, notwithstanding, a light falls from the midst of the clouds upon the body of Christ, and gradually spreads itself over the immediately surrounding objects. The head, the body, and the left arm of Our Lord are considered to constitute the finest work Rubens ever executed. The vast white drapery intended to envelop the Sacred Body, and spreading from the summit to the foot of the cross, serves as a base to this noble figure, and relieves by its transparent reflection the prevailing yellowish and azure tints. This same white drapery is skilfully employed to sustain the general harmony, by fixing the most clear and vivid light on the centre of the group.

By this contrivance of the painter, all the colours acquire a new intensity, and an eminently picturesque opposition has been established in all the principal parts.

The red tint of the tunic of St John and the green drapery of the Magdalene, contrasted with the pale body of the Saviour, heighten the apparent projection of the group in front; while the blue mantle of the Virgin, half of which is in shade, the blue and purple tone of the vestments of Joseph of Arimathea and of the disciple who is seen to the right, serve to round off the sides.

In painting this picture of the "Descent from the Cross," Rubens seems to have determined to try by a grand experiment the rule of Titian, that a group

should present the effect of a cluster of grapes. To this experiment he was also invited by his subject, which he has adorned with all the beauties of execution of which it was susceptible.

After this statement, the fame even of Rubens will allow it to be said, that this admirable work is in some respects faulty and imperfect. But in considering the head and body of Christ, the heads of the Virgin and Joseph of Arimathea, the touch, the *chiaroscuro*, and the general effect of the whole, minute criticism is disarmed.

In connection with this world-famed picture is an anecdote which, although it has often been told, will bear repetition.

One evening, during the absence of Rubens on his accustomed ride, several students, anxious to ascertain the progress that was being made with a work concerning which they were more than usually curious, contrived, by bribery, to obtain admittance to the master's atelier. As they pressed forward to examine the work, one Diepenbeck, pushed by a fellow-student, fell against the picture, and effaced an essential part of it, the face of the Virgin, and the arm of Mary Magdalene, which had just been finished. Everyone was greatly alarmed : the dread of their master's displeasure, and consequent dismissal from his school, was the prevalent feeling, when John Van Hoeck proposed, as they had yet three hours of daylight, that the ablest of them should immediately undertake to repair the damage, and named Van Dyck, as the most likely to succeed. Everyone applauded the nomination, and Van Dyck, apprehensive of the consequences, was prevailed on to undertake the office, though despairing of success. On the following morning, Rubens entering his painting-room followed by his disciples, and regarding the picture, pointed to the part repaired, observing : " There is a hand and an arm that are by no

means the worst of what I did yesterday," and though on approaching nearer the picture he discovered the work of another hand, yet he was so satisfied with what had been done that he did not think proper to change it.

"The Elevation of the Cross," painted two years earlier for Ste Walburge's, where it remained until the destruction of that church during the French occupation at the close of the eighteenth century, is a magnificent work, but little inferior to the one just described.

The figures are remarkable for their easy and natural attitudes, although inclined to be a little heavy. The great life which pervades the whole, and the variety of the composition, atone in some respects for the want of sentiment. In the figures of Our Lord and His executioners, Rubens displays his thorough acquaintance with the anatomy of the human frame. The horses are noble and lifelike, and a dog has even been introduced to impart greater diversity to the scene. The latter was added by Rubens in 1627, when he retouched the picture. The wings form part of the same subject. On the right is a group of women and children, with horror depicted on their countenances; behind them are the Virgin and St John; on the left, mounted officers, and behind them the two malefactors, who are being nailed to the crosses by the executioners.

Among the numerous picturesque churches which adorn the city of Antwerp, those of St Jacques and St Paul are, from their size and sumptuous adornment, the most deserving of particular attention.

The former is a well-proportioned cruciform structure, with a grand but unfinished western tower.[1] It is in the later period of the Pointed Style (1479-1507), and like Nôtre Dame possesses great simplicity in its arrangement and detail, but is much

[1] Illustrated on p. 46.

enriched with works of sculpture of great merit, executed by some of the best Flemish artists.

The accompanying illustrations, reproduced from the very beautiful drawings by Wild, sufficiently indicate the general design and character of this church, which has chapels adjoining the aisles throughout its entire length, and a circumambient aisle to its four-sided apse. The Renaissance screen dividing the nave from the choir[1]; the early seventeenth-century stained glass, chiefly by Van Diepenbeck, which several of the windows have been fortunate in retaining; the sumptuous altarpieces; the screens behind the choir stalls, and the confessionals, two of which are seen in Wild's view of the south transept, are among the *instrumenta* which, if incongruous with the architecture in the eyes of the purist, undoubtedly assist in producing an *ensemble* of richness and splendour, almost unparalleled, even in this land of Post Gothic furniture.

The chapel at the extreme east end was appropriated to receive the remains of Rubens, whose affectionate widow, Helena Forman, determined to celebrate his obsequies in a manner suitable to his illustrious character. His remains were conveyed to this chapel, attended by the clergy and chapter of the cathedral, and of the Collegiate Church of St Jacques, and by the various orders of the Mendicant Friars. At the side of the bier walked sixty boys of the Orphan Asylum, each bearing a lighted taper in his hand, the deceased being immediately followed by his family, the magistrates of the city, the members of the Academy of Painters, the nobility, the merchants, and the leading citizens of Antwerp, by whom he was greatly respected and beloved.

For the performance of the funeral ceremonies, the Church of St Jacques was hung with black velvet,

[1] Illustrated on p. 78.

at the expense of the family, the service being performed in the sumptuous manner usually adopted for the nobility. His widow afterwards endowed the chapel, and erected the present altar in it. The picture forming the altarpiece is considered one of the best and most pleasing works of Rubens, and, though much injured, retains enough of the master to show that it was executed with great care and skill. It is a Holy Family, in which he has introduced his own portrait as St George, those of his two wives as Martha and Mary Magdalene, his father as St Jerome, his aged grandfather as Time, and his son as an angel.

In a niche within the pediment of this altarpiece is a marble statue of the Virgin that is said to have been executed by Fayd'herbe, with whom Rubens was intimate, though it is attributed by some to Du Quesnoy. The tomb of the great painter, covered by a slab of 1755, and bearing a long inscription in Latin, was alone spared, when, in 1793, every other in the church was broken open and pillaged by the revolutionists.

The *ci-devant* Dominican Church of St Paul, one of the most grandly proportioned, if not the most refined, raised by that order in Belgium, is celebrated for its magnificent Renaissance choir stalls and confessionals.

The plan includes a very spacious nave, with transepts and a deep aisleless choir terminating in an apse, which has been rendered familiar to many by David Roberts' picture of it.[1] There are no chapels to the nave aisles, and as the transepts do not project beyond them they appear, particularly in the exterior view of the church, to be unusually short in proportion to their great height. A Renaissance tower terminating in a cupola is built against the eastern side of the south transept.

[1] This picture is now in the Tate Gallery.

ANTWERP.

The Tower of St. Jacques.

ANTWERP.

The Pulpit in St. André.

The arches separating the nave from its aisles are carried upon tall circular columns with foliaged capitals, whose octagonal abaci support the usual statues of the apostles, and in front of the clerestory windows, which rise immediately above the arcades, as in Nôtre Dame, slightly projecting balconies with traceried parapets do duty for triforia.

The choir was not finished until 1621, but is nevertheless remarkably pure for its age, exhibiting structurally no symptoms of the then prevailing Renaissance, though its sumptuous furniture is entirely in that style. In the groining, which starts from carved corbels, the small pendent bosses are a remarkable feature.

The proportions of the whole are singularly fine, the aisleless apse with its tall, two-light windows being especially admirable.

Formerly there was a rood-loft with return stalls, but these were removed and sold about the middle of the last century. For some time subsequently the wall spaces north and south, against which the screen abutted, stood bare, but about 1860 they were clothed with most elaborate portals following the *motif* of the old carving (leading to the sacristies) which continue the line of sumptuous woodwork westward to the choir arch. It is to be regretted that the authorities did not dare to restore the screen, which need not, of course, artistically—as ritually it advantageously should not—be solid. In a picture by Neefs of the interior of this church in the museum at Amsterdam the screen is represented as solid, with altars on either side of the entrance, and is surmounted by the rood, with St Mary and St John.

The grand cruciform Church of St Pierre at Louvain, though very much smaller than Nôtre Dame at Antwerp, with which it has some features in common, is far more satisfactory in many respects. Indeed

it is one of the finest of those churches in which the capless column is used in lieu of the circular one, so much in vogue in the Low Countries during the three hundred years that the Pointed Style ran its course.

It was begun on the site of more than one earlier edifice, in 1425, and for a little over half-a-century was continued on a uniform and well-digested plan, comprising a choir of four bays terminating in a pentagonal apse with a corresponding number of chapels radiating from the procession path; deep transepts; a nave of proportionate length, with aisles and chapels; and a western façade designed on the true German principle of a great screen, which, had it been completed according to the original design preserved in the Hôtel de Ville, would not only have rivalled those of Strassburg and Cologne, but would have surpassed in height and beauty every building of the kind that had up to that time been erected.

It appears that in 1456 or 1458 the towers which flanked the west end were destroyed by fire. In 1459 the foundations were laid of a new tower, as is mentioned in a MS. in the town archives, but the works were suspended a short time after. Then, in 1507, it was proposed to replace this by three towers of freestone surmounted by openwork spires, which would have had a grand effect, as the central steeple would be 538 feet high (Louvain measure) and those at the sides 438 feet.

Sanderus, Van Ghertel, Leroi, and other writers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, have advanced that this façade was finished according to the original design, but numerous and indisputable proofs attest that this "Œuvre prodigieuse devant laquelle les sept pretendues merveilles de l'antiquité auraient dû elles mêmes fléchir les genoux" was carried up only to the height of the roof of the church, and that then, whether from failing funds, or that

LOUVAIN.

The Nave of St. Pierre, looking East.

it was perceived that the foundations were too weak and the base of the towers too narrow to support such an enormous mass, the work was confined to the erection of a wooden spire, which fell down in 1604 after being seriously damaged by a hurricane some time previously.

The superb central window, with its deeply recessed jambs, and the smaller but equally massive windows in the flanking portions, are sufficient to enable us to form some idea of the grand scale upon which this façade of St Pierre at Louvain was to have been carried into execution.

The drawing, already alluded to as preserved in the Hôtel de Ville, is on vellum, 9 feet high and 2 feet 9 inches wide, and is coarsely but carefully executed. There is also a very elaborate model of this façade, beautifully fashioned in calcareous stone, about 24 feet high and 7 feet 6 inches wide at its base. The central steeple was to have been square and surmounted by a concave spire crocketed, while the flanking towers were to have been polygonal and finished with plainer spires.

Another grand undertaking which never reached its accomplishment is the entrance to the southern transept. The inner doorway was finished, and a commencement had been made of the western side of the porch, when the work appears to have been abandoned. Had this porch at Louvain been completed on the imposing scale in which it was conceived, there can be no doubt that it would not only have surpassed everything else of the kind in Belgium, but, in point of size, might have challenged comparison with some of the finest examples of Late French Gothic work.

The interior of this great church at Louvain is noble from the simplicity and regularity of its architecture, and from the harmoniousness of its proportions. We find the usual division into arcade,

triforium and clerestory very distinctly marked, and we observe especially that the vaulting shafts springing from the same mass of bases as the piers dividing the nave and choir from their aisles run up uninterruptedly, and that the arch mouldings are also carried down the piers without a break, as in such Late Perpendicular buildings as the Chapels of St George at Windsor and of Henry VII. at Westminster.

The spandrels of the arches, both in the nave and choir, are relieved with panelling like those in the eastern parts of Malines Cathedral and St Gommaire at Lierre, and the tracery throughout the church is very good, particularly in the clerestory of the nave, where it is disposed within a large circle.

That portion of the church above which the steeples were to rise is two bays in depth, the central division opening into the lateral ones by arches of the same character as those in the rest of the church, and into the nave by one arch which, rising to the full height of the building, produces an uncommonly grand effect, unencumbered as it is with a gallery for the organ, which in this instance is arranged within a charming Renaissance case above the arch opening from the north transept to the choir aisle.

The rood-loft which spans the eastern arch of the crossing has unfortunately been tampered with, and its use and symbolical signification both destroyed.

Less elaborate than those still remaining at Aerschot, Dixmude, Lierre and Tessenderloo, it was erected during the last decade of the fifteenth century, and consists of three wide arches surmounted by ogee-shaped hoods and finials. Above each arch on the side facing the nave is a series of statuettes within niches. Until the early part of the last century the side arches supporting the back of the loft were filled by two altars and reredoses, and the entrance was closed by two gates of open metal-

work. The removal of this beautiful and essential furniture from the screen was coeval with the destruction of the sedilia, the demolition of the ancient high altar, and the substitution of an Italian design in marble, and a variety of other enormities by which the whole character and ecclesiastical arrangement of the choir were destroyed; and what is most lamentable, all this havoc was wrought by those very ecclesiastics who ought to have been foremost in preserving the ancient traditions.

The upper part of the screen and loft is still, happily, perfect, and is surmounted by the original rood with its attendant figures. The details of the cross are admirably executed, and the whole effect is most striking and devotional.

Under the last arch of the choir on the north or gospel side of the high altar stands the tabernacle for the reception of the Reserved Sacrament, one of the most imposing and elaborate examples of that peculiar item of church furniture upon which the Belgian, like the German artists of the fifteenth century, seem to have lavished more pains than on almost any other article of decoration.

The accompanying illustration of this sumptuous piece of work from a drawing by John Coney, in his "Beauties of Continental Architecture," conveys an admirable impression of this tabernacle in St Pierre, which, hexagonal in plan and soaring spirally amid a mass of crocketed pinnacles to a height of 50 feet, was finished in 1450 from the designs of Matthieu de Layens, master mason of Louvain, and architect of the celebrated Hôtel de Ville.

To the west of St Pierre, and on the left-hand side of the Rue de Bruxelles, is the choir of a red-brick church, in the Flamboyant style, of little architectural interest or importance, but preserving some remains of fine old stained glass in the southern windows of its clerestory. Though dwarfed of its

true dimensions, this little structure has a certain dignity from its loftiness, the three-sided apse relieving it from that truncated appearance which great height and inconsiderable length give. There are lean-to aisles, a clerestory with flying buttresses, and a *flèche* rising from the roof. The four pointed arches dividing the body of the structure from its aisles rise from octagonal pillars.

Adjoining this church is a blocked-up doorway in the richest and latest style of Romanesque art, and dating probably from the end of the twelfth or the beginning of the thirteenth century. The capitals of its receding shafts and the variety of mouldings in the arches are eminently worthy of study, and the whole may be cited as one of the richest and, because rare in Belgium, most valuable examples of this period of architecture.

Of the Church of Ste Gertrude, formerly abbatial, it must be said that the exterior is the most satisfactory part. It consists of a nave and apsidal choir, without aisles, under the same line of roof, and a western tower surmounted by a graceful openwork parapet carried round the octagonal angle turrets, which are crowned with pinnacles, also of openwork. From within the parapet rises a well-proportioned octagonal spire, crocketed, and pierced vertically from its base to its summit.

The tower is simple, and has two tiers of coupled lancet windows on each face. In the tympanum of the western doorway, which is flanked by niches terminating spirally, the flamboyant tracery is glazed. Above is a rose window of ten openings radiating from a quatrefoiled circle. The windows of the nave are obtuse-headed and divided into four lights by mullions without any tracery; in the clerestory, however, the three lights are trefoiled and touch the obtuse containing arch as in Late English Perpendicular work. In the three windows

LOUVAIN.

St. Pierre from the South-East.

LOUVAIN.

The Choir Stalls in Ste. Gertrude.

lighting a separately gabled chapel on the north side of the choir, a decided Renaissance feeling is observable in the treatment of their jambs. This chapel abuts upon, but does not open into, the deep aisleless choir, which is furnished with two rows of stalls exhibiting some of the finest wood-carving in the Netherlands.[1]

These stalls are of oak, and were executed in 1540 by Mathieu de Waeyer by order of the superior of Ste Gertrude, Pierre Was, the eldest son of Pierre Was who in 1486 was burgomaster of Brussels. The bas-reliefs which adorn the backs of the upper stalls, fourteen on either side, represent the history of religion, those on the misericordes scenes from the lives of St Augustine and Ste Gertrude.

There was formerly a rood-screen in this church, much injured by alterations in the seventeenth century, yet retaining a good deal of its original character, down to about 1846, when the idea was conceived of suppressing the return stalls and throwing open the choir to the nave by the removal of the screen. By this alteration the church must have suffered very materially, not only in its ecclesiastical arrangements, but in the general effect of the building.

Lying among some quiet grass-grown streets, a little to the south of the church just described, is Nôtre Dame, built between 1230 and 1260 by the Dominicans, and about the same time as the destroyed one of that order at Ghent.

Like most of the churches raised by Friars Preachers, with a view to the accommodation of large congregations, the area is very spacious, and though inferior in all its dimensions to the Dominican churches at Antwerp, Erfurt, Ratisbon and elsewhere, charms by the simple majesty and the pleasing proportions of its exterior.

Built of grey, agreeably relieved with brown, stone,

[1] Illustrated on p. 224.

and almost entirely in the First Pointed style, Nôtre Dame des Dominicains, as it is called, consists of a nave and chancel, together of eight bays, with clerestory and lean-to aisles which are continued to the graceful pentagonal apse. Outside, the clerestory and roof of the four eastern bays are a little higher than the four western ones, but internally the height of the vaulting is the same. There is no steeple, but one of those modest *flèches* with which the Friars Preachers—particularly those in the Netherlands and North Germany—contented themselves, rises from the higher portion of roof. The clerestory of the choir has flying buttresses and windows formed by three lancets comprised within a pointed arch. In the aisles the windows appear to have been similarly designed, but they have in most instances been deprived of their tracery, and are now mere wide lancets of little beauty. The clerestory of the four western bays has smaller single lancets. The seven windows of the graceful aisleless apse—much more probably a work of the last quarter of the thirteenth century than of the fifteenth, to which Schayes in his " Histoire de l'Architecture en Belgique " assigns it—may be styled Transitional from First to Middle Pointed. Each is of two unfoliated lights, very tall, and with tracery composed of two small trefoils and a cinquefoiled circle. Between each window is a well-graduated buttress, in which the sepia-coloured stone alternates with the grey very pleasingly.

The dignified western elevation has in the centre a large six-light window, subdivided into two lesser ones of three, with fully developed Middle Pointed tracery of the Geometrical epoch, but the lights have been filled in with red brick, a device by no means uncommon both in France and Belgium when, as here, the organ occupies the western gallery.

Internally, Nôtre Dame des Dominicains at

Louvain hardly comes up to the expectations formed of it from the exterior ; paint and whitewash are greatly in evidence ; the capitals of the circular columns supporting the eight pointed arches on either side have been transformed by some "improver" of the eighteenth century into Doric; the octagonal plinths have been painted black in simulation of marble ; and the space between the pier arches and the clerestory "embellished" with figures in the worst style of rococo. Another eyesore is the pseudo-Classical cornice upon which the shafts supporting the ribs of the quadripartite vaulting rest. Were these deplorable interpolations of an age insensible to the beauties of mediæval art removed, and the natural colour of the walls, pillars and roofs exposed, the interior of this church might become one of the most pleasing of its class in the country.

The furniture of this church does not rise above mediocrity, and is, for the most part, of an uninteresting Late Renaissance period, but the stalls, formerly occupied by the Dominicans, by whom the church was served, still remain. Of these there are seven on either side, and five subsellæ, and three return stalls, on either hand of the entrance to the choir, also with subsellæ.

The seats, when turned up, exhibit some fair carving, but the whole work has been spoilt by paint and varnish, whose removal is greatly to be wished. The panelled backs appear to be a later addition, their style presenting an admixture of the Gothic and the Renaissance. In the side compartments of the high altarpiece are figures of Aaron and Melchisedec, and in the central one is the Crucifixion, all against transparent backgrounds. Cherubs amid clouds form the background to the latter, which has a solemn, if not a somewhat theatrical, effect.

The cloister and the convent were in the Pointed

style and enclosed a square court. Having become, at the suppression of the religious houses, private property, it was for the most part destroyed and replaced by secular tenements. The church was made parochial in 1803. Views of the church and its dependencies as existing before the Revolution are given in the "Brabantia Sacra" of Sanderus, the "Theatre Sacré du Brabant," and the "Belgica Dominicanum" of Pierre de Jonghe.

The imposing Renaissance Church of St Michel, built for the Jesuits between 1650 and 1666 from the designs of a member of the college, P. Guillaume Hesius, is chiefly remarkable for the arcades separating the clerestoried nave from its aisles, also for its plan, which is cruciform, and, like the great church in the same style at Douai, transverse triapsal—*i.e.* the transepts as well as the short eastern limb have semicircular ends. The columns, very tall and most gracefully proportioned, support round arches, and belong to that variety of the Roman Ionic order in which the volutes of the capitals are turned outwards diagonally, so as to present four equal faces—a mode which, occurring in the Temple of Concord at Rome, was afterwards reinvented and brought up as a novelty by Scamozzi, in honour of whom it has been distinguished by the name of the Scamozzi capital. Two similar arcades are returned across the church at the west end behind the organ, which was brought here from the conventual church at Herckenrode when that establishment was suppressed at the Revolution. The case, one of the most sumptuous in Belgium, extends almost completely across the church, and together with the confessionals which line the nave aisles may rank as one of the most splendid and sumptuous specimens of its age and class in this part of Europe.

The parish church of Aerschot, although not a

very refined specimen of mid-fourteenth century architecture, is of dignified proportions, and remarkable for the beautiful colour of its materials, but more especially as being the possessor of one of the few mediæval rood-lofts extant in Belgium.[1]

The plan comprises a choir of two bays with aisles and an apse ; deeply projecting transepts ; a nave of five bays with a south porch of singular beauty ; and a tower placed as usual at the west end. There is a clerestory throughout the building, and at the junction of the four roofs, which are very steep, and planned with great artistic ability, is an open turret surmounted by an elongated *flèche*.

Externally the church is built almost entirely of the dark brown ferruginous stone quarried in the locality, thinly banded in parts with white. The lower portion of the tower is treated in this way with a result which is very satisfactory, the juxtaposition of the two colours of stone, besides its decorative effect, serving to display the beautiful Gothic mouldings of the western doorway. The upper part of the tower is built entirely of white stone, so that the colours of the two portions are thrown into somewhat violent contrast. This striping occurs again in the south transept, which has a turret staircase at its western angle surmounted with a graceful crocketed pinnacle. Similar staircases placed eccentrically against the north and south sides, and carried up to its full height, contribute greatly towards the picturesque outline of the western tower, which is crowned with a most quaintly contoured steeple, composed of a truncated octagonal spire surmounted by an enormous globe, which in its turn

[1] According to an inscription placed on the side of the door to the sacristy, the architect of the church bore the name of Jean Pickart: "M semel X, scribis C ter, st V semel I bis. Dum chorus iste pie fundatur honoro Mariæ Saxa basis prima juliani lux dat inima Pickart artifice Jacobi pro quo rogitate."

supports an open turret terminating in a smaller globe and tall metal cross.

Internally the pillars, the arches, the vaulting ribs, the walls of the choir, apse, south transept, and partly those of the north transept, are built of the local stone, which in some places has a purple hue. In the great piers supporting the eastern arch of the crossing, in the arches on either side of the choir, and in those opening from its aisles to the transepts, this deep rich stone is coursed so regularly with white as to produce quite a North Italian effect. Capitals to the columns, whether isolated or attached, are conspicuous by their absence, appearing only in the two bays of the choir, where they are very narrow and devoid of leafage. In the nave the deep rich mouldings of the arches die off into tall cylindrical columns, as at Tirlemont. Another noticeable feature is the plain space between the pier arches and the clerestory, usually relieved with arcading. At Aerschot this space is divided into as many square compartments as there are bays to the nave, horizontally by the string-courses, and vertically by the vaulting shafts, which are continued through the spandrels of the arches to a corbel a little below the point from which they die into the columns. In the choir, where the triforium is likewise wanting, there are no string-courses, but the banding of the walls in alternate layers of dark and light stone tends to mitigate that effect of baldness which would otherwise have resulted from their absence.

The roof of the choir bears traces of having been richly coloured. In other parts of the church the plaster is either falling off in great patches, or has been happily removed altogether, by which means the red-brick filling in of the vaults with their deep cells has been displayed to great advantage.

The most beautiful part of the church is the apse, which is lighted by seven very tall windows of three

lights each, some with geometrical, others with flamboyant tracery. A more splendid field for stained glass could hardly be imagined than these seven elongated windows in the apse at Aerschot, but with the exception of one fragment of mediæval work—a Crucifixion on a blue ground with the arms extending through the three lights in the upper part of the central window—they are quite destitute of it. There is some modern stained glass of very average merit in the windows of the choir aisles, which has the general effect of much of the work which used to be placed in our own churches seventy years ago.

The rood-loft, which is the chief object of attraction for visitors to Aerschot, is an extremely graceful composition, and though not so elaborate as those at Dixmude, Lierre and Tessenderloo, has features in common. Here the series of seventeen sculptured groups, which represent as many scenes from the Passion, commencing at the left-hand side with the Entry of Our Lord into Jerusalem, and ending on the right with His Appearance after the Resurrection, are arranged immediately above the trefoil-shaped and delicately fringed arches supporting the loft. There are five of these arches ; three face the nave and the remaining two the transepts, but obliquely, so that the whole number is visible from the west end of the church.

The three central groups of the series are niched in a three-sided projection supported upon a corbel which overhangs and partly conceals the upper lobe of the arch. A tall finial surmounts each of the four side arches and fills the niche above it in lieu of sculpture.

On either side the entrance to the choir and within the porch, if it may be so styled, formed by the five open arches is an altar, behind which the wall has been stripped, showing only a filling in of brick-

work. The side of the screen facing the choir has likewise been stripped, and as the stalls which are returned against it have no canopies the effect is very cold and bare. Extending along the entire width at the top, and corresponding to the sculptures on the nave side, is a series of obtuse-headed niches, devoid of figures, but provided with pedestals for their support.

The choir has two rows of stalls and subsellæ with finely carved ends. Five stalls and three subsellæ are returned on either side of the door in the centre of the screen ; on the north and south sides of the choir are ten stalls and seven subsellæ, and the seats when turned up display a variety of subjects in carving, one representing the Fable of the Fox and the Stork.

In designing the *corona lucis*, a fine specimen of Flemish ferric art, pendent from the roof at the junction of the nave and transepts with the choir, Quentin Matsys, by whom it was presented to the church, as a memorial of his wife, appears to have been influenced by some of those striking liliaceous plants—the agave, the aloe, and yucca—then recently acclimatised from the New World.

In England, Quentin Matsys is little known, except by his picture of " The Misers " in the royal collection at Windsor, and the legend, always told to visitors, that he was a blacksmith who was inspired by his love for a painter's daughter to become an artist.

To call Matsys a " blacksmith " is just as inappropriate as it would be to call Flaxman a stonemason. He was a poet who gave the exquisite creations of his fancy to the world in iron, as Peter Vischer did in bronze and Cellini in silver. That love made him a painter is a legend we would not willingly lose, and the truth is confirmed by the inscription on his original tombstone, which is now preserved in the

museum at Antwerp below what is universally considered his *chef-d'œuvre*—a Pietà, between the Deposition from the Cross and the Entombment: "Connubialis amor de Mulcibre fecit Apellem"; but that he was an artist of a high order long before he ever handled a brush is proved by the elegant canopy of wrought-iron which covers the old well beneath the shadow of the great spire of Nôtre Dame. After Rubens, his name is greatest amongst the artists of Antwerp. But Rubens has filled that city so full of his glory that one is hardly conscious of any presence but his.

CHAPTER VII

LIÉGE[1]

LIÉGE is one of the most ancient and attractive of the many interesting places in the kingdom of Belgium. Long the metropolis of the dominions of a prince bishop, the fruits of its ecclesiastical wealth have descended to us in the few venerable churches which remain after many have been destroyed, whilst its mineral riches, worked up in its iron foundries, and its factories of cutlery and firearms, have upheld its prosperity through every revolution and change of government.

The site of Liége is picturesque. The lower portion is situated in a level flat occupying both sides of the rapid Meuse at its junction with the Ourthe.

The older and more interesting quarter of the city lies on the western bank of the river, and contains the Cathedral of St Paul and the Churches of St Jacques, St Christophe, St Jean, St Denys and St Barthélemy.

Between this and the higher town extends a boulevard, above which rise terraces of houses intermixed with trees, and crowned on the summit by the Churches of Ste Croix and St Martin.

From the fact of Liége having been held as a fief of the German Empire from the tenth century to the French invasion of 1794, its architecture partakes very largely, if not exclusively, of a Teutonic character. This is particularly noticeable in such Romanesque portions of churches as have escaped being pulled down to make way for larger and more

[1] See Appendix.

splendid buildings which the increasing wealth and population of the city demanded. St Jean, St Denys, St Barthélemy, St Jacques and Ste Croix retain their western towers and façades in the several manners of working the Romanesque style that were in vogue between the tenth and thirteenth centuries. The three first named preserved their early naves and choirs down to the Later Renaissance period, when they were rebuilt in that *baroque* style which a hundred and sixty years ago was in the ascendant. An entire reconstruction of St Paul's (the present cathedral) was pursued between the end of the thirteenth and the first half of the sixteenth centuries; the nave and choir of Ste Croix were rebuilt in the fourteenth, and those of St Jacques in the early part of the sixteenth, centuries. In the Pointed Gothic churches the German school asserts itself in the aisleless apses of St Jacques and St Denys, among others; and in one instance, in the unclerestoried nave of Ste Croix; while the plain cylindrical column and the lofty clerestory of the cathedral serve to remind us that we are in a country whose architecture is for the most part a fusion of the Teutonic and Gallic element.

It is not only from the variety of their architecture that the Liége churches are so interesting to the ecclesiologist, but as illustrations of natural colouring, careful restoration having brought to light the charming blue and yellow stone of their walls and pillars, and the red brick of their vaults, which paint, plaster and *badigeon* had so long obscured from view.

The original Cathedral of Liége, which stood on the Place St Lambert opposite the Palais de Justice (formerly the residence of the prince bishops), was utterly destroyed during the French occupation at the close of the eighteenth century.

It was probably an excellent type of the Pointed

style, but is so poorly and insufficiently represented in the topographical works of the period that preceded its destruction that it is impossible to gain anything like a correct idea of its appearance.

On the restoration of religious order in 1801, the Collegiate Church of St Paul, a cruciform structure of ample dimensions with a large cloister and chapter house, but, externally at least, presenting few departures from the stereotyped form of a Belgian church, became the cathedral.[1]

Although of ancient foundation, dating from the episcopate of Heraclius, Bishop of Liége in the middle of the tenth century, no part of the present structure is anterior to the end of the thirteenth. The earliest parts are the choir, the transepts, the chapter house, and the piers and arches of the nave; the latest, the clerestory and vaulting of the nave, which, were it not known that they were in progress in 1528, might be assigned to a much earlier period, since the window tracery is of the geometrical instead of the flowing kind. We may assume, therefore, that the original design was followed.

Of the western tower, the ground storey—*i.e.* as far as the spring of the nave roof—is original; the belfry stage with its coupled lancet windows, its corner pinnacles, and its spire constructed on the model of the principal one of the destroyed cathedral, is a work of 1813, and, as may be guessed from its date, of exceedingly poor design.

Although simple, the interior of the cathedral is impressive from the majesty of its proportions, and its constructive colouring.

For the large circular columns dividing the nave from its aisles, and partly for the arches, a slate-coloured stone is employed. In the rest of the arches the colour of the stone is yellow, also in the arcades of the triforium, and in the ribs of the simple quadripartitely vaulted roof, which retains its original

[1] See Appendix.

painting. The design, similar to but less elaborate than that of the contemporary work at St Jacques, is a beautiful scroll pattern, flowers and birds being introduced into the spaces formed by the convolutions. Green is the dominant hue. The same scheme of decoration is adopted at the crossing, in the choir, transepts and nave aisles. The last named are double, but the outer ones have been subdivided into chapels. The choir, which is of two bays and has a three-sided apse with tall windows of two lights each crossed by a transom, is quite German in conception. It seems to have been without aisles originally, as the walls beneath the two very elegant geometrically traceried windows which light it on either side are unpierced by arches. The aisles, therefore, can only be entered from the transepts. Like those of the nave they are double, and have their geometrically traceried windows filled with tolerable modern stained glass. The two tall windows on the eastern side of either transept are remarkable, and somewhat resemble those in Westminster Abbey, being of two trefoil-headed lights with a large cinquefoiled circle. From the northern transept the seven narrow pointed arcades on the opposite side of the nave have a very fine effect. The bases of the pillars are good and stilted, but the capitals are somewhat poor, having merely some tame foliaged ornament in a narrow band under their octagonal abaci. There are four trefoiled arcades on slender detached shafts in each bay of the triforium, with a delicate diapering in the spandrels, while one large window of four lights occupies each compartment of the clerestory. At the west end of the nave an arch rising to the full height of the interior opens into the groined space beneath the tower with noble effect. A bold arcading in blue stone is carried round the lower part of the walls on each of the three sides, and higher up,

on a level with the triforium of the nave, the north and south sides of the tower are similarly enriched.

The great west window is a fine composition of eight lights, subdivided by a thick mullion, which is carried up to the apex of the arch and intersects the circle that fills its head in a manner more singular perhaps than beautiful. But the most remarkable feature of this window has to be described. The great depth of its reveals has enabled the architect to introduce into its lower half what is termed an inner plane of tracery. Midway the eight lights are crossed by a transom of such width as to form a gallery in front of the upper half of the window. Below this transom the space is divided by isolated mullions into as many compartments as there are lights to the window, each compartment having its own miniature barrel-shaped roof.

The stained glass which fills the five windows of the apse and the great one of the south transept was inserted between 1530 and 1587, and therefore represents the art in its latest phase, just before its declension. That in the south transept is the earliest and best, and extremely magnificent. The radiance of the scene in which the Coronation of the Virgin is laid reminds one of nothing less than a gorgeous, golden sunset which grows more mellow towards evening when the light is low.

In mediæval and Renaissance furniture Liége Cathedral is quite deficient, the low brass screen separating the nave from the choir, the stalls, and the reredos being part of the extensive works of restoration and embellishment that have been set on foot at different times during the last century. All are, however, in excellent taste, and combine with the natural and artificial polychromy of the building to produce one of the richest and most beautiful church interiors in the country.

The stalls, which occupy the two bays of the choir

on either side are of unusual excellence. The canopies are fine in form, and exquisite in delicate detail, but the decoration of the back with figure compositions in relief is most notable. The subjects —on the south side the Resurrection of Saints, and on the other the Translation of the Relics of St Hubert—are managed with the greatest skill. The treatment hits a happy mean between the pictorial and the decorative; the faces and attitudes are expressive even to dramatic intensity, yet the general arrangement of lines, the fall of drapery, the artistic apportionment of subject to space, and above all the subtle management of relief, keep the compositions quiet, dignified as artistic creations, yet perfectly harmonious as accessory decoration to the larger architectural forms around. The author of this successful work—Durlet, of Antwerp—has shown himself not untouched by the influence of the great painter Leys in a certain earnestness and severity of style, but he has sought greater grace of line, and a softer, more passionate beauty of type.

Doors in the south transept and at the west end of the south aisle admit to the cloisters. The walks, which are on the west, south and east sides of the quadrangle formed by them with the nave, are vaulted partly in brick and partly in stone, but the windows are devoid of tracery. The chapter house, which opens from the eastern ambulatory, is a parallelogram divided into three vaulted aisles of as many bays by slender pillars, and each aisle is lighted at its east end by a broad low window of three compartments with geometrical tracery. In the same walk the splendid scrollwork on the door of a square-headed portal should be especially noticed.

More graceful in some respects than that of the cathedral, and equally valuable as an illustration of the beautiful effects that can be produced by a

skilful combination of variously hued materials, is the interior of St Martin's.

Imposingly situated on one of the northern heights of the city, and approached from the Boulevard de la Sauvenière by flights of steps, St Martin's is a lofty but not very long church, consisting of an apsidal choir without aisles, transepts, nave of four bays, and square tower well elevated above the roof and surmounted by a low pyramidal capping.

The mouldings of the four narrow and acutely pointed arches on either side of the luminous nave are carried upon slate-coloured shafts grouped about massive piers of the same hue, capitals being given only to the shafts on the sides facing the aisles. For the arches and other details of the upper parts yellow stone has been used, and red brick for the filling in of the vaults.

The triforium is rich and well developed, and the tracery in the four-light windows of the clerestory resembles some of our best Early Perpendicular work.

The tower is groined in red brick, and its walls, which are of the same slate-coloured stone as the piers in the nave, are relieved at the basement by arcading. The west window is of four lights, transomed. There is no western doorway, the entrances being at the ends of the nave aisles. Immense windows of three lights, full of stained glass, surround the choir, which is a prodigy of light and space, more intricately vaulted than the nave, and of the most beautiful proportions.

One of the chapels opening from the south aisle of the nave is remarkable as being vaulted at right angles to the axis of the church. It is of red brick and pointed in form, with a succession of stone ribs, not dying off into the wall, as in the side chapels of St Mary's, Scarborough, or in the porch of the neighbouring church at Ganton, with both of which the arrangement at Liége may be compared, but

prolonged in the form of shafts without capitals to the floor of the chapel.

A series of modern paintings on the north and south walls of the choir commemorates the institution of the Festival of Corpus Christi, with which St Martin's has the distinction of being especially connected.

The story goes that Juliana, abbess of the neighbouring Convent of Cornillon, having, in a vision, seen the full moon with a piece out of it, and being told by a voice from heaven that this signified the want of another festival, Pope Urban IV., who had been a canon of Liége at the time of the "vision," instituted that of Corpus Christi. This was in 1246, since when the festival has been annually observed throughout the Catholic world on the Thursday next after Trinity Sunday.

It was for the mass of this Festival that Thomas of Aquino wrote, about the year 1260, the celebrated sequence *Lauda Sion Salvatorem*, one of the four which are alone retained in the Revised Roman missal of 1570. For the same festival Thomas of Aquino, at the request of Pope Urban IV., drew up in 1263 the office in the Roman Breviary, and probably also that in the Roman Missal. In form this sequence is an imitation of the *Laudes Crucis attollamus*, and consists of nine stanzas of six lines followed by two of eight and then one of ten lines. Its use was primarily for Corpus Christi, but in the Sarum Use the eleventh and twelfth stanzas, commencing *Ecce Panis Angelorum*, might be used during the octave.

Though not a prolific hymnwriter, Thomas of Aquino has contributed to the long list of Latin hymns some which have been in use in the services of the church from his day to this.

They are upon the subject of the Eucharist. The best known are *Pange lingua gloriosi Corporis Mysterium* (Of the glorious Body telling, O my

Tongue, its mysteries sing), *Adoro Te devote latens Deitas* (Devoutly I adore Thee, Deity unseen), *Verbum supernum prodiens* (The heavenly Word proceeding forth), *Sacris sollemniis juncta sint gaudia* (Let us with hearts renew'd this feast of new delight, etc.), and the *Lauda Sion Salvatorem* (Laud, O Sion, Thy Salvation).

Various other hymns have been attributed to Thomas of Aquino, but in error, as *O Esca viatorum* (O Food that weary pilgrims love) and *Ut jucundas cervus undas æstuans desiderat*, of which a translation commencing, "The thirsty hart pants with desire the cooling streams to taste," is given by the late Mr D. T. Morgan in his "Hymns and other Poetry of the Latin Church." The former was in all probability the work of a German Jesuit of the seventeenth century, while the latter has been attributed to Bernard of Cluny, Hildebert, Archbishop of Tours (*c.* 1134) and St Anselm. It is the opening of a poem, or rather cycle of poems, known as the *Mariale*.

The plainsong melody of the *Lauda Sion* is an extremely noble composition, and is probably coeval with the hymn itself. It is as well known to students of mediæval church music as those of the three other great sequences, and translations to suit it, based upon those of Dr Pusey, Warkerbath, and Rev. J. D. Chambers are to be found in several English hymnals.

To the last two stanzas, *Ecce Panis Angelorum* (Lo the angels' Food is given), and *Bone Pastor, Panis vere* (Very Bread, Good Shepherd, tend us), Rev. J. B. Dykes contributed a strikingly beautiful setting, which made its appearance in the Appendix published in 1868 to the first edition of "Hymns Ancient and Modern."

Of the numerous settings of the *Lauda Sion* in cantata form, the most widely known in England is that by Mendelssohn, who had been invited to

compose it for the six hundredth celebration of Corpus Christi Day at Liége. It was sung for the first time, and under the conductorship of the composer, on 11th June 1846 in St Martin's Church, which, the *Annales Archéologiques* for August of that year inform us, was newly covered with whitey-brown wash by the *curé* expressly for the occasion.

The foundation of St Martin's dates like that of the cathedral from the episcopate of Heraclius (*c.* 962), but there are no remains of any predecessor of the present structure, which is entirely a creation of the first half of the sixteenth century.

The neighbouring Church of Ste Croix, however, preserves a very graceful specimen of Late Romanesque architecture in the shape of an apsidal "western choir" and steeple, which appear to have been added about 1175 to a church, founded only ten years later than St Martin's, by Bishop Notger.

This western apse or choir of Ste Croix is purely a German design with all those features which characterise the form of architecture in vogue in Germany during the great Hohenstaufen period, and in the century immediately preceding the accession of that dynasty to power.

The sides and apse of this choir are divided into seven compartments lighted by as many round-headed windows inserted within shallow pointed arches, and filled with decorated tracery. They are well splayed, with a bold roll over the head, and have circular nookshafts banded half way down. Immediately under the eaves of the roof, but separated from the windows by a narrow strip of unrelieved wall, is a series of open arcades, not continuous, but grouped in triplets within each of the seven compartments, into which this portion of the church is divided.

Behind the apse the tower rises. Gabled on each of its eight sides, and supporting a short octagonal

spire, it bears a very striking resemblance to that of Sinzig, near the Rhine, between Bonn and Coblenz.

Instances of the western apse occur in France, but its use seems to have dropped out there after the Romanesque period, whereas in Germany it reproduced itself down to the middle of the thirteenth century, so that, together with the semicircular or pentagonally apsidal transept, it may be considered a feature peculiar to that country. The Romanesque examples of the western apse are to be met with most frequently in the Rhenish Provinces, as at Laach, Mayence, Trèves and Worms. In Hanover we find it in the Churches of St Godehard and St Michael at Hildesheim, and in Lower Saxony in the abbey church at Gernrode between Halberstadt and Quedlinburg. The western apses of the cathedrals at Bamberg and Naumburg, and of St Sebald's Church at Nuremberg are beautiful specimens of the First Pointed style, and occupy the sites of earlier erections of the same kind.

The use of this western apse has never been satisfactorily explained, but, as it occurs only in churches of cathedral, monastic or collegiate rank, we may assume that it was appropriated to the parochial altar, while that at the east end contained that of the capitular or conventual body. And this view is confirmed by the fact that at Mayence and Augsburg (where a later example than the three just mentioned exists) the western apse is called the *Pfarrchor* (parish choir) to distinguish it from the eastern one, which is styled the *Domchor*, or canons' choir.

By some antiquaries this western apse is considered to be a survival of the detached baptistery with which cathedral and conventual churches were provided in early times; by others that, raised, as it occasionally was, upon a crypt, its erection arose from a desire to do equal honour to the relics of two saints of like celebrity.

The presence of the western apse at Ste Croix may be accounted for by the fact that when the church was built Liége was a German city, and ecclesiastically a suffragan see to Cologne. It may possibly have existed in other churches, but this is the only example extant.

A decidedly German character pervades the newer portions of Ste Croix, eastwards of the tower, exhibiting as it does a complete departure from the stereotyped form of a Belgian church. Its unusual features are the uniform height of the nave and its aisles, and the omission of triforium and clerestory, which is a natural consequence of such an arrangement as was almost universal in North-Western Germany throughout the Pointed Gothic period.

Whatever may have been the motive for so complete a revolt from Belgian precedent, the result certainly justifies it; for we have here an interior which looks both dignified and spacious in spite of there being something to reprobate in the construction of the nave vaulting. One possible explanation of the design is that it was thought desirable to retain the western tower and apse, and that the church was consequently strictly limited in height, or it may have been that the whole design was simply an ingenious way of getting a church of large area at much less than the usual cost.

This reconstruction of the nave, transepts and choir of Ste Croix took place in the fourteenth century, of which period the work is a very refined and elegant illustration. Sir Gilbert Scott had a great admiration for it, and in all likelihood he had this church in mind when preparing the designs for three of his most remarkable works, St Paul's, Dundee, St Andrew's, Westminster, and St Mary's, Stoke Newington.

The nave of Ste Croix has four bays, and the aisles are roofed transversely to it from gables above the

windows, which are four-light ones, with tracery of the most beautiful description, and placed sufficiently high in the walls to permit the formation of shallow chapels. These open from the aisles by arches, are likewise gabled externally, and lighted by large spherical triangular windows of excellent tracery and detail. The effect produced by this breaking up of the elevation into two storeys of windows is pleasing, and recalls in idea the arrangement in the nave of the church at Oppenheim, a *chef-d'œuvre* of early fourteenth-century Rhenish Gothic.

At Ste Croix the gables of these projecting chapels, which had previously been constructed in shabby brick, were rebuilt in stone, carved with a panelled pattern, about seventy years ago, under the direction of M. Delsaux, who scraped the whitewash off the interior, thus exposing the tall, cylindrical pillars in their original blue limestone, and the walls and vaulting ribs in their yellowish sandstone.

One of the most noticeable features of the interior is the manner in which the architect, with the object no doubt of giving a more *élancé* appearance to the work, has started the groining ribs of his nave roof from corbels attached to the columns, instead of from their capitals. Tradition has it that, frightened at his temerity, the architect fled, rather than superintend the striking of the centring of the vault. A little colour is applied to the ribs at their junction with the keystones, as in the nave of Worcester Cathedral, and with pleasing effect.

The ends of the transepts which do not project beyond the chapels lining the nave aisles, have noble windows of six lights filled with modern stained glass. The tall windows in the choir and apse are of two lights with three trefoils above, like those in the chapels round the *chevet* of Cologne Cathedral; a highly symbolical design. They are all filled with modern stained glass, that in the three central

LIEGE.

The Nave of the Cathedral, looking East.

LIEGE.

The Font in St. Barthelémy.

windows of the apse being by German, and in the one on either side by Belgian, artists.

The *chorus cantorum* extends a short way into the space formed at the junction of the four arms, where the attached shafts and the arches they support are particularly graceful and worth studying. The western apse forms a baptistery.

St Barthélemy, near the river at the east of the city, must, in its original Romanesque state, have been a most imposing church, but unfortunately the whole of the interior has been recast into modern Italian so that as a historical monument it is far from interesting.

It is probable that in the rebuilding much of the old material was made use of, particularly on the exterior, which, to a casual observer, looks like Romanesque, but the only original portion is the great western façade, which in the form of a narthex stretches across the whole breadth of the church. Two low towers rise above its roof quite engaged on all sides. Each face of each tower is divided by a pilaster strip into two vertical compartments both of which are subdivided by horizontal corbel tabling into two stages. Each tower has four equilateral gables, and a low quadrilateral spire rising between the gables from the corners of the tower, against which the roofs of the gables cut. There is not a trace of the pointed arch in the outside of this great western façade or its towers, at St Barthélemy; but on ascending one of the latter by a wide spiral staircase, round an unusually massive newel, with a continuous rubble barrel-vault all the way up, the towers (the dimensions of which are 14 ft. 6 in. by 13 ft. 10 in.) are found to be supported on plain pointed arches (13 ft. from impost to impost, and 9 ft. from the crown to the horizontal line) of two concentric courses of voussoirs, each 13 in. broad, and 3 ft. 7 in. in the soffit.

This must be an early example of the pointed arch, the church having been founded in the eleventh century; it was used probably for its greater strength.

Like the great western screen mass at St Jacques, this at St Barthélemy had no doorway, the present one having been inserted when the church was modernised. The walls are relieved with surface panelling in three storeys, sunk under wide round-headed arches.

In the choir the following valuable inscription is preserved :—

"✠ Hic jacet scē memorie vir nobilis Dns Godescaleus de Moreameys prepositus Leodiēn Fūdator hujus basilie qui pio (?) ab h . . . erexit et XII. Canonicos in ipsa instituit de allodiis et pat'moniis suis anno Dni M° X°."

Another inscription commemorates the founder's translation :—

"✠ Translatio ejusdem a navi eccīe ad hunc chorum."

"✠ Anno milleno bis bino ter c trigeno Junius (?) in fossa presenti reddidit ossa."

"✠ Ejus qui pridem fūdavit nos : det eidem Cristus solamen, celi dicat chorus. Amen Sancte memorie colitur sic justus eternæ."

Uninteresting as the interior of St Barthélemy now is from an architectural point of view, it is rather impressive, there being a spacious nave with clerestory and double aisles, transepts, short apsidal sanctuary and apse opening from the eastern side of either transept, thus proving that, with the exception of the addition of the outer aisles, the original Romanesque plan was adhered to. The order employed is the Ionic, the round arches

dividing the nave from its aisles being gathered up into groups of twos and threes.

In the north-eastern apse stands the celebrated brazen font[1] cast early in the twelfth century by Lambert Patras of Dinant. It is now cased or let into stone at the lower part, so that the original design cannot be quite followed; the cover also, if there ever was one, is gone.

Round the sides are groups in high relief representing St John preaching to the Publicans and Soldiers, and baptising the Multitude; the Baptism of Our Lord, who is represented with the Eternal Father and the Holy Ghost, St John Baptist and two angels; the Baptism of Cornelius by St Peter; and that of the Philosopher Graton by St John Evangelist. Each subject has a legend inscribed on the surface of the metal between the groups as follows:—

"Corda parat plebis Domini doctrina Johannis:
"Hos lavat: hinc monstrat quis (*sic*) mundi crimina tollat:
"Vox Patris hic Aig (?) est: lavat Hunc homo: Spiritus implet
"Hic fidei plenos [est] Petrus hos lavat: hosq; Johannes.

The figures are dignified and in action spirited, essentially Gothic, but marvellously free from the grotesquely archaic element. In no way do they strike one as inferior to Italian work of the same period. The draperies flow freely and with grace, the faces have beauty of expression, the modelling is firm and good. The group representing the Baptism of Graton is particularly fine. The philosopher is represented half immersed in a circular vessel, while St John Evangelist, in Roman habit, with nimbus, holds his right hand over the re-

[1] Illustrated on p. 242.

cipient's head, and reads from a book in his left. All the baptisers, except St John Baptist, have their thumb and two forefingers open, and the other two closed. In the group representing Our Lord's baptism the grace is represented as descending from a Dextera Dei, in three lines, each composed of three rays. Round the base of the font as supports are ten oxen—in imitation, perhaps, of those which sustained the "molten sea" in the courtyard of Solomon's Temple. Only the heads and shoulders and forelegs of the oxen are visible, which is rather unfortunate, as they give one the impression of a desire to extricate themselves from the solid metal base in which they are half hidden. But as studies of animal form and attitude these oxen are very remarkable for the early date of the workmanship. They are all different in position and show close and loving observation of nature; the modelling is capital, the execution sharp and vigorous. Round the rim immediately above these oxen is the following inscription :—

"Bissenis bobus pastorum forma notatur,
Quos et apostolice commendat gratia vite,
Officiq; gradus, quo fluminis impetus hujus
Letificat sanctam purgatis civibus orbem."

A cast of this remarkable font, presented by the Belgian Royal Commission for the interchange of reproductions of works of art, is in the Architectural Department of the South Kensington Museum, where may also be seen replicas of the equally celebrated though much later font in Nôtre Dame at Hal, and the soaring Early Renaissance Tabernacle in St Leonard's at Leau.

Behind the Rue St Gilles, at the junction of the Boulevarde Avroy with that of La Sauvenière, lies the Church of St Christophe, which although it contains the only specimen of a Romanesque nave arcade

now existing in Liége, is quite ignored by the guide-books. There are eight bays of round arches on either side supported upon columns, all of which are cylindrical except one, which is square. The capitals are short but boldly foliaged, and the arcade recalls, on the whole, those seen in the churches at Hildesheim.

Probably it was typical of those Romanesque arcades in other of the Liége churches, which have disappeared on their reconstruction during the Pointed Gothic period, or during the era of Classicism, which was fatal to the interiors of St Denys, St Barthélemy, and St Jean.

The rest of St Christophe was recast in the very worst type of pseudo-Italian, and in that state the writer first saw it in 1889. Since then the whole church, with the exception of the nave arcade, has been rebuilt, the style employed being First Pointed of the simplest and severest type.

There are lean-to roofed aisles to the nave, and a low clerestory lighted by a continuous series of round windows; broad transepts; and a square-ended choir raised seven steps above the nave.

The waggon-shaped roof with tie-beams is carried uninterruptedly over the arches opening into the transepts, so that the cruciform character of the church is not apparent internally. On the outside the long line of roof is only broken at the commencement of the choir by a *flèche*, the transept roofs being kept at a lower level.

The transepts open into the nave by round arches on pilasters with foliaged capitals. An open arcade surmounts the arches opening into the nave at its east, and into the choir at its west end. The effect of this arrangement is very good and picturesque. In the aisles the windows are composed of two lancets under a pointed arch, the tympanum being left unpierced. The east end has a triplet of

tall lancets, and the west end a similar triplet with a smaller one above.

The fenestration of the transept ends resembles that of the western façade, with the addition of a small circle on either side the upper triplet of lancets. Stained glass, in a style appropriate to the architecture, fills many of the windows; the furniture is in good taste, and the whole church, apart from its Romanesque nave arcade, is well worth a visit, as an indication of the progress of ecclesiastical architecture in Belgium during the last quarter of a century.

The Church of St Denys has mediæval portions. The tower—a huge Romanesque mass with side turrets—and the outer walls of the nave, are of the original fabric, but the interior of the latter has unfortunately been translated into Italian. The choir, rebuilt during the latter part of the fifteenth century with an aisleless apse, lighted by tall windows, is a favourable specimen of its epoch, and, rising as it does considerably above the western part of the church, imparts a singular appearance to the external outline.

It is the fashion to quote the very beautiful carved woodwork of the brothers Geefs, Duncanget, Geerts, and others, as evincing a perfection consummated in modern days over the earlier schools; and if the comparison be made with the pretentious Italian products of the eighteenth century the statement may be borne out by the increased refinement of design and sounder taste of the Revived Gothic school; but one should go further back to see from what the art has fallen. For instance, in the north transept of St Denys there is a wooden retable of subjects from the Passion of Our Lord and the life of the saint to whom the church is dedicated, carved in high relief and set within a fine elaborate architectural structure of canopies and niches, the

scale of the figures varying from about six or eight inches in the lower compartments, to a foot or more at the top. The whole is a masterpiece of dramatic expression and plastic style.

This noble example of sculpture in wood dates from the close of the fifteenth century or earlier, and the name of the master has not come down to us; but if we set it beside the best examples of modern wood-carving (and the pulpit in the cathedral is a fair test) we can see that the modern Gothic school is, in the higher qualities of art, far below the masters of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

A great deal has been produced since the Gothic Revival in Belgium of "imitation antiques" both in wood and plaster, for altar triptychs and other ecclesiastical purposes, and clever enough these imitations, mostly coloured and gilded, are, for the mannerisms of the early Flemish school are easy to catch; but it is needless to remark that the real spirit of the older artists is not to be inherited through soulless imitations, as we in England, under the infliction of much feeble and plagiaristic ecclesiastical art, have learnt to our sorrow.

Of the Church of St Jean l'Evangéliste, built in 982 by Bishop Notger on the model of the Dom at Aix-la-Chapelle, there are no remains. The present tower was a subsequent addition, and the nave and choir, though preserving the ancient form, are not older than the eighteenth century. The nave is an octagon, opening into an ambulatory by arches, and surmounted by a clerestory and dome, in the later style of the Renaissance; beyond is a long aisleless choir. The general effect of the interior is good, but the destruction of the Romanesque edifice, which must have been one of the most interesting of its age in the city, is deeply to be deplored. The church was flanked on its western side by a cloister, which still exists, though rebuilt in Late Gothic, and

too much restored to be interesting. In the centre of it a statue of Bishop Notger has been placed. He is represented in chasuble and mitre, and holds in one hand a model of the destroyed church, whose choir was much shorter than the present one. From this model we are enabled to derive some idea of what the Romanesque church was like before its destruction in the eighteenth century.

The tower, which is attached to the western side of the octagon, is a valuable example of German Romanesque. It is built of brick, striped vertically and horizontally with bands of stone, is flanked by circular newel turrets with conical cappings, and bears a pleasingly proportioned octagonal spire.

Of all the Liége churches, that of St Jacques is the most celebrated. Its architecture has been greatly admired and praised, in some particulars more, perhaps, than it deserves ; but on the whole it must be considered the most splendid specimen of the closing period of Gothic architecture in Belgium, and quite free from any suspicion of the swiftly advancing Renaissance.

The most interesting part of St Jacques, perhaps, is the west end, which is Romanesque, and the only relic of the church founded in 1016 by Bishop Balderic II. There is a lofty, three-staged oblong narthex (its axis being north and south), with no west door, and a broad, low-gabled roof, out of the ridge of which rises a dwarf octagonal tower. Each face of this tower has a rude, round-headed window, containing two openings and a circle above them ; and above each face is a low pediment, rich in triple billet moulding on its three sides, with a row of dentels and a corbelling of eight semicircular arches under the lowest side. There are cylindrical shafts at the angles of the tower. Above all, there rises a low eight-sided spirelet from the eight depressed gables.

This octagonal steeple was an addition of the second half of the twelfth century, and fits very ill with the narthex, from the roof of which it rises, and is moreover half swallowed up in the great roof of the sixteenth-century nave.

As rebuilt between 1513 and 1538, St Jacques is cruciform, and clerestoried throughout. It is 254 feet long, 92 feet wide and proportionately high, and terminates in an apse which, as it has the peculiarity of five low chapels radiating from it without any intervening ambulatory, must be regarded as a compromise between the French and German systems of east end planning.

The chief glory of St Jacques externally is its magnificent series of windows, whose tracery may, on the whole, be styled reticulated rather than flamboyant, while something of the English Perpendicular character is discernible in the great twelve-light windows of the transepts. In every case where a window is made up of an even number of openings, a pinnacled buttress is attached to the central mullion, which is prolonged to the apex of the containing arch.

The tracery in the seven clerestory windows of the nave, and in the two larger and loftier ones on either side of the choir, is of singular beauty. An external gallery, with a richly arcaded front, extends completely round the church just beneath the roofs. Apparently it is a reminiscence of those arcades that form not only one of the most common, but certainly the most beautiful feature of a school of architecture which had great influence in Liége, that of the Rhineland.

On the north side of the nave is a very deep and lofty porch of three bays, pierced in their upper halves with flamboyantly traceried windows of five lights and relieved in their lower ones by a corresponding number of arcades, which are not continued

in the form of mullions, but corbelled off against the walls. The groining, which springs from slender shafts with foliaged capitals, is as strong and fine as some of our best Early Perpendicular work, and the spaces formed by the ribs are painted with a pattern of leafage.

The entrance to the church has a depressed arch, whose mouldings are carried down without a break to tall bases, and the wall space above it is enriched with tracery, answering to the side windows of the porch, except that a circle is substituted for the curvilinear patterns, and that the two central mullions are omitted to make room for sculpture representing seated and crowned figures of Our Lord and the Blessed Virgin.

Whether this porch was furnished with an outer entrance of correspondingly beautiful design is doubtful. The existing one was built between 1558 and 1560 by Lambert Lombard in that Renaissance style of which he was one of the earliest exponents in Belgium.

The treatment of the nave arcade in St Jacques is quite different from that in any other Belgian church. Instead of the stereotyped cylindrical column we have here two slender shafts placed transversely, and at a little distance from each other, against the great piers of the vaulting. From these shafts rise pointed arches, whose one order of moulding is fringed with a kind of open foliation, not altogether to be admired, and evincing a strong Spanish influence. The spandrels of the arches are embossed with foliage in shallow relief containing oval medallion apertures, whence protrude a number of carved heads of Bible characters.

Between the pier arches and the clerestory there is a considerable expanse of wall, the upper half of which is panelled with trefoiled arcades corresponding in number with the lights in the clerestory

windows, and the lower merely relieved by two plain arched recesses. The lower portion of this wall is, however, screened from the view of the spectator in the nave by the parapet of a covered gallery which is formed above the pier arches. Pierced parapets in this position are frequently met with in the Late Gothic churches of Belgium, but this at St Jacques, Liége, exhibits a beauty and cleverness of design and execution so exceptional as to require some description.

There are three tiers of apertures, not separated by string-courses, but dovetailing the one into the other, by which means a lacelike effect is produced. The lowest range of openings assumes the form of ten trefoiled arches on pillarets with bases but no capitals. In the intermediate row the apertures are cusped vesicæ and sexfoils arranged alternately, while in the uppermost, a series of circles, uniformly quatrefoiled, serves to keep the whole well in balance.

In the choir, where the clerestory windows are longer than those in the nave, the wall space below them is pierced with arches to afford room for minstrels' galleries like those in the Lady Chapel of Gloucester Cathedral. These galleries, which have elegantly pierced parapets, are paved with encaustic tiles only an inch and a half square, arranged in mosaic patterns, and are reached by double staircases, so constructed that there are two distinct flights of steps winding one above the other.

The same kind of parapet is carried completely round the choir above the five fringed arches opening into the chapels behind the apse, and is also employed for galleries formed within the bays of the nave aisles, where the windows are placed high up in the walls so as to light the galleries aforesaid.

In the choir and apse of St Jacques it would seem

that the *ne plus ultra* of Late Gothic exuberance had been reached. Most of the beauties—and also, it must be confessed, not a few of the defects—of the period are here exhibited; yet the effect of the whole is so splendid and so picturesque—all the arts auxiliary to architecture having been enlisted into its service—that we are almost driven to the wild luxuriance of nature to find anything to which it can be compared. We may not inaptly term this choir of St Jacques a romance in stone, consisting of a profusion of the most playful fancies; and though we wonder that stone could be cut into such a variety of lacelike forms, and are dazzled by the splendour of the whole, it is with relief that we turn from this elaborate specimen of declining taste to an earlier and purer style.

The five great three-light windows in the apse are filled with stained glass, which M. Capronnier, who was entrusted with its cleaning and reparation more than eighty years ago, considered to date from between 1520 and 1540. It represents various subjects: the donors, their armorial bearings and their tutelary saints.

In the Crucifixion, which forms the principal subject of the central window, it is observable that our Lord's arms extend beyond the monials into the adjacent lights. The subject is well treated altogether; angels are represented receiving the sacred blood into chalices; and St Mary Magdalene kneels at the foot of the cross. The tracery within the circle above is filled with angels. Another window has the Assumption, surmounted by a Hierarchy. The glass in the window next to the central one on the left hand is interesting as having been presented to the church by that distinguished victim to despotism, John Count de Horn, who at the commencement of the troubles in the Low Countries was one of the greatest subjects in point

of office and reputation, but whose moderation could not obliterate the crime of having shown himself in any degree a friend to the liberties of his country.

Together with Count d'Egmont, he was taken prisoner, on 9th September 1567, by order of the Duke of Alva, Governor of the Low Countries under Philip II., and after trial by a special commission, to the terror and indignation of the whole Flemish people, was beheaded in front of the Hôtel de Ville at Brussels on 5th June of the following year.

A kneeling figure of the unfortunate donor occupies the lower part of the central compartment in this window.

The vaulting throughout the nave, choir and transepts of St Jacques is not only remarkable as being the richest and, apparently, the most complicated specimen in a country where the primitive quadripartite method of groining was adhered to, almost universally, in works of the latest period, but a most valuable example of how to solve the problem of treating very small and irregularly shaped surfaces with polychromy. The complication is, however, only the effect of perspective, since, when reduced to drawing, the lines of the vaulting form a simple geometrical figure.

The spandrels formed by the ramifications of the groining ribs are turned in red brick covered with a floating of strong hair mortar averaging one sixteenth of an inch in thickness, and forming a ground for delicate arabesques which combine with the colouring on the ribs to produce an example of roof decoration almost unrivalled in northern Europe for gorgeousness.

In the spaces formed by the ribs, the dominant hues are green and white, the former being employed for the patterns, which are of foliage treated in the most delicate manner scroll-wise, and the latter

for the groundwork. In some parts the leafage is interspersed with flowers and studded with medallions painted with heads, all of which betray a distinct Renaissance, or rather Raffaellesque, feeling in their drawing and colouring.

The tone of the ribs is mainly yellow, but at the points where they spring from their shafts, or join the lesser ribs, minute squares of blue, grey, red, white and green are judiciously combined in a short band.

In the volume for 1844 of Weale's *Quarterly Papers on Architecture*—an important and richly illustrated work of varied character—five very finely coloured drawings are given of this roof decoration at St Jacques in the several parts of the church.

Magnificent the interior of St Jacques undoubtedly is in its *ensemble*, yet it must be confessed that, on a close examination, it exhibits signs of weakness.

The vaulting is, in reality, poor and crippled, showing a decline in that geometrical knowledge which distinguished the best age of mediæval art.

The springers built in the wall, and the ribs arising from them, do not abut fairly, or correspond the one with the other, the original design having probably been changed. The awkward junction between the two is attempted to be hidden by the introduction of shields to cover them, and the bosses at the intersection of the vaulting can hardly be pronounced graceful.

Notwithstanding these defects, which hardly force themselves upon the superficial observer, the interior of St Jacques must be pronounced a most fascinating one, the best of its kind, and in its luxuriance often making us forget that there is something better and higher which neither wealth nor power can command unless combined with the simplicity of true greatness.

CHAPTER VIII

OUDENARDE, HUY, AND LIERRE

THERE is no part of Europe more deficient in what is known as scenery than Flanders; and those who journey there must spend most of their time in the old towns which, in spite of "the march of modern improvement," are still so strangely mediæval in their aspect, or in country places which are worth seeing only because of their connection with some event in history—nature has done so little for them. Thus the interest and the attraction of Flanders and the Flemish towns are chiefly historical.

Here are decayed towns, once kingly cities, still clustering round a church or churches—which in England would pass for cathedrals—or a sumptuous Hôtel de Ville; and dead seaports, whilom crowded with ships from all parts of the world, now left to the winds and the waves, with little to tell of former greatness beyond some rich fifteenth-century house called after the merchant prince who lived in it.

Such places as Furnes and Oudenarde in the days of Jacob Van Artevelde were second only to Ghent and Bruges and Ypres in commercial importance; now they are little more than hamlets, only haunted (the last stage in the eyes of a town) by the architectural student or the artist.

Ypres itself, with its glorious Early Gothic Cloth Hall and adjacent *quondam* Cathedral of St Martin, had in its palmy days 200,000 inhabitants, now it has little over 20,000.

But for the contemplative traveller there is a great compensation. When places cease to be the

centres of commercial activity, they belong to the poet and the artist.

Nieuport and Furnes; Bergues and Commines; Dixmude and Aerschot, and a score of others, forgotten as they are, are still names to conjure with —more even than the better known names of Ghent and Bruges, of Louvain and Liége; of Malines and Brussels.

We seem to feel no desire for Antwerp, so strong is our wish for Dixmude, Lierre and Oudenarde, especially perhaps for the sake of the exquisite rood-lofts in the churches of the two former, and for the almost perfect First Pointed Nôtre Dame de Pamèle in the latter. One may throw in Bouvignes, the civic village opposite Dinant, in the fourteenth century its deadly rival, hating it as only neighbours can hate.

From these but little visited nests of history the French chroniclers have come forth. Froissart from Valenciennes, Monstrelet from Cambrai, Philippe from whence his name springs, Commines.

Nor is it a strain on the fancy to picture Peter the Hermit on his deathbed at Huy, nor to learn that Cornelius Jansen ended his war of theology in a peaceful tomb within St Martin at Ypres.

But, for the most part, the historical framework of these cities is always the same, dreary in its monotone luridness—battle, murder and sudden death; visitations of the plague and famine; sieges, sacks by Charles the Bold or Philippe le Bel, by dukes of Burgundy or kings of Spain, the first in vengeance for rebellion of the citizen against the suzerainship; the second in the constant struggle between the French crown and Burgundy. Then followed pillage and rapine, and an entire town razed to the ground, and a few years after, rising Phœnix-like from its ashes, thriving and rebelling again.

It was on account of the principles they embodied —the assertion of popular power—that these strongholds of citizenship survived. The rebels were always the *metiers*—the democratic guilds of trade—and though the dukes and nobles might suppress them, might destroy the guildsmen of the hundred, they could not destroy the idea which inspired them. These humble heroes, ordinary burghers, only live on in the names of their leaders, as the fame of countless builders and sculptors only survive in visible cathedrals and churches.

Among the less commonly visited churches of Belgium are three, each of which, apart from its size and structural merit, is exceptionally valuable and important as illustrating a distinct architectural period.

They are Nôtre Dame de Pamèle at Oudenarde, Nôtre Dame at Huy and St Gommaire at Lierre.

In the first named we have a specimen of the Pointed style shortly after it had assumed an existence separate from the Romanesque, at the beginning of the fourteenth century. The second, a century later, exhibits the art exactly at that point of perfection at which nothing on earth is permitted to stop—after the bud and before the rankness—the flower just blown ; in the last we see neither an immature nor a declining form of art, but the fully developed Gothic just at the turning point of its career.

Nôtre Dame de Pamèle at Oudenarde is doubly remarkable. First as a perfect model of the First Pointed style, and secondly because Arnould de Binche, who furnished the plans, is the earliest known Belgian artist who made architecture his study, not only as an amateur, like the monks of the Abbey of Dunes, but also as an architect by profession.

The first stone of this most interesting church,

which was built at the expense of Arnould, Seigneur of Oudenarde, was laid 14th March 1235, and four years later it was completed under Alix, the widow of the founder. It seems that it was proposed in the fifteenth or sixteenth century to rebuild this church on a new plan, which project, had it been carried out, would have deprived the country of one of the rarest and most valued of its ancient monuments.

Fortunately little more has been done to alter the original design than to slightly extend the northern transept, and to rebuild the south aisle of the nave, in the geometrical and flamboyant phases of the Second Pointed style respectively.

The plan of Nôtre Dame de Pamèle comprises a nave of four bays with aisles and clerestory, transepts and choir of two bays, also clerestoried, and with aisles carried round the five-sided apse. At the intersection of the cross rises an octagonal tower surmounted by a low spire of the same shape which composes with the other parts a remarkably pleasing piece of architecture, though an additional bay to the nave, which seems rather too short for its height, would have vastly improved the *ensemble*.

The western elevation is imposing. Above the doorway, whose arch rises from coupled shafts, is a tall window of two lights surmounted by a circle ; neither the lights nor the circle is cusped. On either side this window is a pair of lancets, and over each pair is another lancet, blocked.

In the northern aisle each of the four bays is lighted by one lancet window, that towards the east being somewhat narrower than the rest. The clerestory presents a very pretty arrangement of four triplets of lancets, each triplet being grouped within a shallow pointed recess. The eastern and western sides of the transept have similar windows in the part corresponding to the nave clerestory, but in the fourteenth-century addition the windows

occupy the whole height of the wall. The western window is of two compartments, the eastern one and the pair lighting the northern front being of three openings each, and all have tracery of a good geometrical type. Above the northern pair of windows, which are set within shallow arched recesses like the tripled lancets in the nave clerestory, is a sexfoiled circle.

It would appear that, in rebuilding the northern front of this transept in the fourteenth century, the materials of the previous one were used again, and the design, to a considerable extent, reproduced.

This is observable in the lancet which relieves the gable, and in the circular flanking turrets, which, with their conical pinnacles and arcading, are of a type frequently occurring in Belgian Gothic work of the thirteenth century.

On the eastern side of this transept, between the buttress separating the work of the two periods, and the north aisle of the choir, is a graceful shallow porch, which, as it blocks one of the three lancets with which the first bay of the choir aisle is lighted, belongs to the second period. The doorway itself is double and square-headed, but the tympanum of the pointed arch which surmounts it is devoid of sculpture. A smaller doorway with a trefoiled arch is in the first bay of the choir aisle.

In the clerestory of the two-bayed choir, and in the aisles, which are carried round the five-sided apse, the windows are lancets arranged in triplets, but without the circumscribing arch.

The clerestory of the apse has a single lancet window in each side, and the pile, viewed from the north-east, presents so severe an *ensemble* as to give the impression of a Cistercian building.

The southern transept front has a window like that at the west end, while those lighting the chapels

which project from the much later aisle on the same side of the nave have flamboyant tracery.

Internally we find the nave divided from its aisles by four boldly moulded arches resting upon short circular columns with shallow capitals ornamented with leafage in the *à crochet* style and octagonal abaci. The triforium stage has six arcades in each bay, but without capitals to the shafts ; in the clerestory the tripled lancets are set almost flush with the wall, and the ribs of the quadripartite vault start from slender shafts corbelled off just above the string-course separating the pier arches from the triforium. The same type of column is employed for the arcades separating the choir from its aisles. In the spandrels of the arches, which in the apse are stilted, and of great elegance, are niches filled with modern statuary.

The triforium arcades in transepts and choir have capitals to their shafts which give an appearance of much greater richness to the work. Tall semi-circular attached columns with two rows of foliage, but similar in style to that in the capitals of the nave and choir piers, support the arches at the junction of the four arms and the ribs of the groining which has four deep cells. All the groining is of stone except that in the south aisle and its chapels, where it is of red brick and contrasts very pleasingly with the prevailing tone of the interior, which is of a bluish-grey material like Tournai. At the east end of the southern range of chapels the lancet window, which originally lighted the western side of the transept, appears, and at the west end of the nave the large two-light window is seen through an arch with, on either side of it, two lancets opening to a passage formed in the thickness of the wall.

The whole of the interior has been restored and cleansed from paint and whitewash, thus revealing the natural colour of the stonework, which is well set

off by the stained glass. All this is modern, but of excellent character, that in the clerestory of the choir and apse, representing full-length figures of saints, is treated archaically, but, like that in the charming series of tripled lancets which light the aisles and procession path around the apse, in accordance with the style of the building. There is also some excellently treated glass in the pair of tall three-light windows in the north transept, each compartment having a canopied figure at the bottom, while the supervening space is filled with a simple pattern work. By this means the proportions of the windows are well preserved.

The other church at Oudenarde, Ste Walburge, a work of two distinct architectural periods, presents a singular but highly picturesque grouping of parts.

Beginning at the east end, we find a choir of two bays, with wide, square-ended aisles under separate gables, but no clerestory, terminating in a short sanctuary and five-sided apse. Next comes the eastern side of a transept of the same date as the choir, and closely adjoining it the western aisle of a new transept, which has been carried up as far as the commencement of the clerestory ; then beyond this we have a lofty clerestoried nave of five bays and one of the most imposing western towers in Belgium.

It would appear that, early in the fifteenth century, the entire reconstruction, on a much grander scale, of a First Pointed church was determined upon, and the work begun, not in the usual way at the east, but at the west end.

The nave, the western aisles of the transepts with their triforia, and the tower, had alone been rebuilt about the beginning of the sixteenth century, when operations came to a standstill, the choir and the eastern walls of the transepts being left in their old

state, just as we see them to-day. Historically considered, this suspension of the work is a matter of rejoicing, because the church in its present state, with its enormous nave and unfinished transepts soaring above the modestly dimensioned choir, affords us an admirable instance of the manner in which the mediæval architect went to work when called upon to gradually replace a humble building by one of a more imposing character. Had the transepts and choir of Ste Walburge's been carried on to completion on the same grand scale as the nave, the work might have taken a very high place among its contemporaries.

Viewed from the east Ste Walburge's has a most striking appearance, due to its great breadth. The central feature in the group is the pentagonal apse with its tall three-light windows and sharply pointed roof. In the rear are seen the gabled ends of the choir aisles, each lighted by a large window of five compartments with a large circle in the head, and flanked by a cylindrical turret, which supports an octagonal pinnacle. Beyond are the remains of the old transepts, and joined to, but rising above them, the western sides of the unfinished new transepts with plain arched recesses in their triforium stages. Carrying the eye again to the centre of the group, we observe the gabled end of the nave, with its arch designed to form the western one of the four opening into the crossing, but which, ever since the suspension of the works in the transepts and choir, has remained blocked. Completing the picture we have the tower, boldly buttressed, enriched in its two upper storeys with coupled windows, and finished with a graceful parapet, inside which rises an elongated cupola of eight curved sides. This supports a low octagonal turret forming the base of a spire, whose restoration would certainly improve the appearance of the capping, which in its present incomplete state

cannot be pronounced a graceful termination to so harmoniously proportioned a tower.

Other interesting external features of Ste Walburge's, which, owing to the lowness of its eastern portions, appears in distant views to consist only of a western tower and clerestoried nave, are the coupled lancet windows lighting the choir aisles on their north and south sides; the prolongation to the western face of the tower of the nave aisles, which include shallow chapels beneath their steep lean-to roofs; and the adornment with canopied niches of the lofty arch enclosing the western doorway and window after the manner common in Belgium during the later period of Pointed architecture.

Internally, the nave, although very majestically proportioned, presents no very striking departures, either in plan or detail, from the normal fifteenth-century Flemish type. It has emerged from a thorough restoration: the tracery, of which all the windows had been deprived, having been reinserted, the stone-work cleansed of plaster and whitewash, and colour temperately introduced into the bosses of the roof and the groining ribs adjacent to them. There is no stained glass as yet, and the filling of the windows with sheets of plain ground glass in lieu of the customary leaded panes contributes to the prevailing air of coldness, which strikes the visitor, fresh from the interior of Nôtre Dame de Pamèle, with its blue-grey pillars and coloured windows, somewhat unpleasantly.

The usual grand arch opening from the nave into the space beneath the tower is here, also the typical range of tall, circular columns, with effigies of the apostles attached to them, and flowered capitals. The triforium is a rather lofty expanse of wall only relieved in each bay by two shallow, round-arched recesses, but above each pier arch, and in front of the above-mentioned space, is a slightly projecting

balcony guarded by a parapet, rather tall, and pierced with tracery, alternately geometrical and flamboyant. Each severy above the triforium is completely filled with a window of five lights in the latter style, and the ribs of the quadripartitely vaulted roof are prolonged without the intervention of capitals to the octagonal abaci of the columns separating the nave from its aisles.

These latter are rather narrow, and open into shallow chapels lighted by flamboyantly traceried windows of four compartments. Between the entrance to each chapel a triplet of attached shafts with foliaged capitals receives the groining ribs of the aisle roof. The continuation of the aisles to the western boundary of the tower, into which they open by arches uniform in height with those of the nave, produces an appearance of much space and majesty. Looking up the nave aisles in an easterly direction, the curious effect created by the much greater width of those of the choir will not fail to be noticed.

The transepts, it will be recollected, are composed partly of the old and partly of the new work. Of the latter, the western aisles, with their columns and arches, are all that can be viewed internally, the triforium being concealed by the roofs of the old transepts, which lean against the arcades of the new ones, and therefore only visible from without.

The interior of the choir, which is separated from the nave by an arch, having above it an unrelieved expanse of wall, presents no architectural features of much interest. It is bare of furniture, has no clerestory, and is divided from its aisles by two rather wide pointed arches on circular columns. The aisles have waggon-shaped roofs, and each terminates in a large, five-light window filled with praiseworthy modern stained glass, for which the wide openings and the large foliated circles in the heads have afforded a very advantageous field.

Once upon a time Huy was one of the most picturesque spots on the Meuse between Liége and Namur, and the banks, both up and down, were remarkable for beauty. But the proverbial war between the utilitarian and the picturesque finds here full illustration. After passing some five miles down the river from Namur, the fine cliffs, which alternate with wooded hills and more level cultivated land on either side the stream, are being quarried out of their natural form and stripped of their garlanded foliage. Here a red scar defaces the rock like a wound, and there the noble crags are hewn out in angular or slant masses, while a stretch of rubble spreads in hideous confusion between cliff and river. Kindly Nature hastens to cover with grass and creepers the injuries man inflicts, but the beauty of the scene is really gone.

Just at Huy, the hills on the right bank follow the round curve of the river with soft enfolding wood, and half of the little town gathered about the lofty Collegiate Church of Nôtre Dame and its three towers, with the sombre grey stone bridge in front, groups well against the background.

Like a multitude of other churches in the ancient bishopric of Liége, Nôtre Dame at Huy claims for its real or supposed founder St Maternus, first Bishop of Tongres. At any rate there existed in the eleventh century at Huy a small church or chapel dedicated to the Virgin, on the site of which Théoduin, Bishop of Liége in 1048, erected a new church, much larger and more splendid, which was consecrated in 1066. Remains of this church are still evident in the lower part of the aisle walls of the present structure, which was commenced in 1311, but not completed until two centuries later ; the style therefore is partly geometrical and partly flowing Middle Pointed.

There are three towers, one at the west end of the

nave, and one on either side of the choir at its junction with the apse—a unique arrangement in Belgium. The former, though not very lofty, is imposing from its simplicity and the massiveness of its proportions, and terminates in a low pyramidal capping, which is modern, the wooden spire with which it was formerly surmounted having been destroyed by fire in the eighteenth century.

There is a representation of this spire in the first volume of the "Délices du Pays de Liége." The eastern pair of towers are crowned with pierced parapets and pinnacles, and have a somewhat English look. The nave is of four bays, and the choir, which ends in a pentagonal apse, without the circumscribing aisle of four. The transepts do not project beyond the line of the chapels fringing the nave and choir aisles, and therefore appear somewhat shallow in proportion to the length and height of the building, which derives its impressive effect from its large scale and general air of massiveness.

The fenestration throughout the church is unusually bold and good. There is no doorway in the tower, but in that portion of the western side of it which corresponds in height with the nave arcades is a large round window, very richly and deeply moulded, and filled with tracery radiating from a circle which encloses three trefoils. The tracery is arranged in the form of ten two-light windows, the space between each and the rim of the great enclosing wheel being occupied by a small inverted trefoil.

The front of the northern transept is almost entirely filled by a tall window of eight lights, divided into two lesser windows of four by bold sub-arches springing from a massive central mullion. At mid-height the eight compartments are crossed by a transom.

There is a similar window in the opposite transept,

HUY.

Notre Dame from the North-West.

but not so tall, the space below it being occupied by another window in the form of an arch enclosing one very large and two small circles, all filled with geometrical tracery.

In the apse the three enormously tall two-light windows in the centre, rising as they do to the apex of the vaulting, produce an uncommonly grand effect. The two side windows are walled up to the height of the last arch on either side of the choir, which is slightly canted, only the upper portion corresponding with the triforium and clerestory, being glazed.

The clerestory window in the fourth bay on either side of the choir against which the tower is built is likewise walled up.

Tall, cylindrical columns with foliaged capitals support the deeply moulded arches throughout the church.

There is a low triforium arcade of six trefoiled openings to each bay and over this a parapet pierced with quatrefoils forms the balustrade to a passage in front of the clerestory. The vaulting is the usual simple quadripartite one, the ribs being sprung from shafts carried down to the bases of the columns of the nave and choir arches, and the cells tastefully painted with leafage on a white ground.

In the choir and apse the groining ribs are crossed, at a little distance above the capitals of the vaulting shafts, by a band of foliaged ornament.

The three great windows in the central portion of the apse are filled with modern stained glass of excellent character. It is designed in the First Pointed style, each window having six tiers of subjects placed within medallions, extending, regardless of the mullions, through the two lights into which each window is divided.

At the west end of the nave an arch, rising to the full height of the interior, opens into the tower,

the piers from which it springs assuming the form of pilasters with slender shafts at each end. The great size of the tower has necessitated its vaulting in two bays, and arcading, in continuation of the nave triforium and clerestory, enriches the north, south and west walls. The organ, divided into two parts, as at St Jacques, Antwerp, is placed upon a poor Ionic screen within the tower arch.

Throughout the church the detail is very superior, especially worthy of attention being the arcade work in the walls below the windows of the transepts and at the west end of the north aisle of the nave, where there is a blocked window of three compartments with tracery of the most beautiful geometrical character. But the gem of Nôtre Dame at Huy is the portal connecting the east end of the choir with the neighbouring block of houses, which occupy the site of the ancient college on the south side of the church. The two entrances into which this Portail de la Vierge is divided are square-headed, and their lintels are relieved with a row of quatrefoils.

Over these is a pointed arch fringed with statuettes under tabernacle work, the intervening space, forming the tympanum of the doorway, being divided into three parts by arches, within which is a quaint triad of reliefs.

In the sinister compartment is the Nativity. The Blessed Virgin is lying, with the Divine Child at her breast, upon a draped couch, over which, on the right, St Joseph appears in contemplation. Above this group on the other side, the Holy Child is represented wrapped in swathing bands, lying in a manger beneath a penthouse, and regarded by two oxen, and above again is a group of adoring shepherds.

The dexter half of the tympanum represents the Adoration of the Magi, and the diamond-shaped compartment formed by the two sub-arches, with the

enclosing one, King Herod and the murdered Innocents. The whole of this sculpture is most beautiful, and, with that above the portal of the Hospital of St John at Bruges, takes a very high place among kindred works of its age and class in Northern Europe.

At Lierre, about half-an-hour's ride by train from Antwerp, is the Church of St Gommaire,[1] one of the most magnificent and harmoniously proportioned of the great Belgian churches, in progress during the greater part of the fifteenth century, and remarkable not only for its sumptuous rood-loft, but for its window tracery, than which nothing can be more varied and beautiful.

The plan of St Gommaire, which does not present any very striking departures from the normal one employed in Belgian churches of the first class, comprises a nave of six bays whose aisles are prolonged to the front of the western tower ; transepts with a chapel on the eastern side of each ; and a choir of four bays terminating in a five-sided apse, round which the choir aisles are carried, with seven apsidal chapels opening from them.

Although the construction of this superb specimen of Flemish architecture was undertaken at intervals, from 1425, when the foundations were laid, to 1515, the design exhibits great homogeneity. In England, a church built at different times during the same period would present greater divergencies of style, and on that account would be of greater value and interest to the student, but here the whole building seems to have been conceived in the mind of its architect and to have been carried out without variation as means permitted.

Usually, the reconstruction of churches in the Middle Ages began with the choir, but in Belgium this order of things seems in several instances to have been reversed, as for example here and in Ste

[1] See Appendix.

Walburge's at Oudenarde, where an ambitious nave and unfinished transepts of late fifteenth-century date soar above the earlier and more modestly dimensioned choir.

At Lierre the nave was in progress between 1435 and 1443, the transepts between 1460 and 1475, and the choir between 1473 and 1515.

The western tower, begun in 1425 and completed thirty years later, though of good proportions, is hardly equal to the rest of the church. It is square as far as the height of the nave roof ; then it becomes octagonal, and is crowned with a cupola, which, dating from the early part of the eighteenth century, replaces a lofty wooden spire destroyed, together with the upper part of the octagonal portion, by fire in 1702.

From the western side of the tower projects a tall deep porch with buttresses relieved by niches, but of plain and somewhat heavy exterior, and apparently an afterthought. Inside, its walls are lined to about half their height with a series of trefoiled niches under crocketed gables with pinnacles between them and a well-moulded string-course above. The door leading into the church is square-headed and included within an arch having two orders of mouldings filled with canopied niches for statuary which, as well as in those decorating the tympanum, or space between the lintel of the doorway and the arch, is wanting.

Allusion has been made to the window tracery in St Gommaire. This is not only extremely magnificent but interesting from the act that it is, for the most part, original, hardly any of the windows throughout the church having been, as is so generally the case in Belgium, deprived of their tracery.

The aisle windows are a perfect mine of transitional enrichment ; the south aisle, indeed, can scarcely be said to go beyond the bounds of late

Middle Pointed. In the clerestory of the nave, which is crowned with a graceful pierced parapet and pinnacles, the windows are of five lights having large flamboyantly traceried circles in their heads. On the south side the flying buttresses are supported upon what is really the upright continuation of the divisional walls of the aisle chapels, and appear somewhat clumsy from the great proportion of these upright abutments, which, occurring close together, quite hide the clerestory windows from an oblique point of view.

In the nave aisles all the tracery in the five-light windows is geometrical in design, excepting those in the parts which flank the tower, where it is flamboyant, while in the choir clerestory, which is particularly noble, and in the large eight-light windows of the choir aisles, both forms are used.

This is remarkable when we remember that the choir is the latest portion of the church, and proves that geometrical tracery held its ground in Belgium when, in other countries, and in England especially, it had entirely disappeared on the introduction of the flowing variety.

The great window in the north transept, in two divisions, is Flamboyant, but with an almost ultra-Perpendicular effect, the central mullion running up to and bisecting the apex of the arch, thus subdividing one large window of eight lights into two lesser ones of four. The three west windows of this transept are very early Flamboyant, of six lights apiece, and of the most magnificent work. The great window of the south transept, also of eight lights, may be fairly called Geometrical, except that the wheel in the head has some tendency to Flamboyant.

At the east end of the north nave aisle are two chapels, one of which projecting a little beyond the other breaks the outline of the church on this side very agreeably. The apse with its tall clerestory

of two-light windows, its flying buttresses and crown of seven apsidal chapels combines, with the other parts of the church, to produce a magnificent *tout ensemble* viewed from the north-east. A good general view can be obtained from the south side, where there is a tolerably extensive unoccupied space.

At the junction of the nave and transepts with the choir a simple *flèche* of slate rising picturesquely from an octagonal turret serves to unite the component parts of this truly noble exterior, which is built of white stone and shows but few signs of having been through the hands of the restorer.

Within, St Gommaire at Lierre,[1] though less grandiose than the cathedral at Malines, to which it bears a very striking resemblance, is perhaps the most pleasing of all the Belgian church interiors. The justiness of the proportions of the central and side aisles, both in themselves and to one another, is admirable. The triforium stage is well developed throughout the church, and the tall, cylindrical column with two rows of leafage in the bell of its capital is alone employed. In the nave the spandrels of the arches are plain, but in the choir and apse are overlaid with a netlike tracery, which confers an appearance of much greater richness upon those parts of the church. The latter equals some of the best French examples ; its five arches, very narrow and stilted, but with the finest mouldings ; its open triforium arcade, and its tall clerestory windows filled with old stained glass are altogether very noble, and the effect of the whole when viewed from the west end is greatly enhanced by what must be called the gem of Lierre, its rood-loft, one of the few in Belgium that have escaped destruction either at the hands of the sixteenth-century iconoclast or the Italian innovator of a later period.

The work of Henri Van Prée of Brussels, and

[1] Illustrated on p. 268.

completed in 1535, this rood-loft in St Gommaire is perhaps the finest of all the Belgian *jubés*. Nothing can be more exquisite than the whole design and detail of this screen, which in itself would repay a visit from England. With artists it has ever been a favourite subject. David Roberts exhibited a striking picture of it at the Royal Academy in the early fifties, and one by Louis Haghe, entitled "The Company of Archers leaving the Church of Lierre after hearing Mass on St George's Day," was included in a collection on view at the Gallery of Messrs Leggett & Hayward in Cornhill during the winter of 1860-1861.[1] In this striking and interesting picture Haghe showed a thorough appreciation of his subject and mastery of his art, the venerable pile being realised in the purest archæological spirit, and with great pictorial effect. The group of archers seen issuing from beneath the screen is full of character and spirit, and the whole is a complete and telling picture of burgher life in the olden time.

Another painting by Louis Haghe of the interior of St Gommaire is in the Bethnal Green Museum, the view in this instance being taken from the procession path behind the high altar.

Like the rood-lofts at Dixmude, Louvain, Tessenderloo and Aerschot, this at Lierre projects into the space beneath the crossing, and is supported on five arches, three of which face west, and one on each side obliquely, north-west and south-west. These arches are obtuse, fringed with cusping, and rise from black marble columns, whose capitals support figures of the evangelists and doctors of the Western Church, all surmounted by graceful canopies, which mount up to and mingle with the richly carved work of the upper parts of the loft. Immediately above each

[1] An engraving of this picture appeared in *The Illustrated London News* about the same time.

arch is a large trefoil, the wall space around which is overlaid with a delicate lacelike pattern in white stone. A string-course separates this stage of the loft from the upper one, which is divided into a series of panels containing scenes from the Passion, beginning at the Betrayal and ending at the Crucifixion. These groups, most delicately carved in white stone, are carried round the sides of that ambon-like projection which, except at Louvain, is a characteristic feature of these Late Flemish Gothic rood-lofts. At Lierre this projection supports a tabernacle whose niches contain sculpture illustrating two of the miracles of St Gommaire—his calling forth a fountain when his servant was dying of thirst, and his healing a sick child. Above this is a niche which terminates in a graceful pinnacle, and enshrines a figure of the saint.

When viewed from the west end of the church, where it can be taken in conjunction with the decoration in the wall spaces formed by the five arches of the apse, this rood-loft at Lierre, with its wealth of minutely sculptured ornament, assists in producing one of the most delightful architectural spectacles in the country.

An altarpiece in the form of a carved or painted triptych, to take the place of the existing Italian one which covers the wall within the arch on either side the entrance to the choir, is only wanting to complete the picture.

It may be added that about eighty years ago this rood-screen was restored in a manner very creditable to the town, except for the addition of a sham painted pierced battlement round the top, which has since happily been removed.

Some fine but late mediæval stained glass still exists in the eastern clerestory of either transept, in the great window of the northern one, in one window of the clerestory on the north side of the

choir, and in the four last windows towards the east in the south aisle of the nave, where the work *en grisaille* should be especially remarked. Fragmentary as are the specimens in the upper parts above mentioned, they are sufficient to give some idea of the magnificent appearance the church must have presented when all its windows were as completely filled with stained glass as are those in the clerestory of the apse, where two tiers of single figures occupy the upper part of each light and armorial work the lower.

Most of the windows in the seven chapels encircling the apse have received modern stained glass, which, as it has been carried out on a uniform plan, is very satisfactory. At the bottom of each light is a single figure, and above, four small groups distinctly treated, and arranged beneath conventional Middle Pointed canopies.

The Renaissance stalls, which are not canopied; the lectern, a handsome one of brass with a figure at the apex of its two sloping desks relieved with graceful pierced work; and the large carved and painted triptych which has been substituted for the Classical high altarpiece, unite in composing an *ensemble* whose picturesqueness would be enhanced by the addition of stalls, furnished with canopies, and returned against the back of the rood-screen on either side the entrance.

There is so great a similarity in the architectural features of St Gommaire at Lierre, and in its mode of construction, to those of other great churches of its age and class already described, that to dwell upon them in detail would be tedious.

It should, however, be mentioned that each bay of the aisle on the south side of the nave opens into a shallow chapel; that a grand effect is produced by the tower arch, rising as it does, unimpeded by an organ gallery, from semi-cylindrical piers with

foliaged capitals, almost to the full height of the interior; and that the nave aisles, which are prolonged to the western face of the tower, open into the groined space beneath it by low arches springing from attached columns and surmounted by two tiers of closed arches arranged in pairs without mullions or tracery. To sum up, St Gommaire at Lierre is in every respect a noble specimen of architectural vigour and activity in the fifteenth century, and one whose acquaintance no visitor to Belgium should fail to make.

CHAPTER IX

A List of some of the most remarkable Pictures in the Churches described or alluded to in this Volume

ALOST

St Martin

(A noble Late Flamboyant Gothic structure which, had it been completed, would have ranked with St Pierre at Louvain and St Rombaut at Malines, in point of architectural magnificence if not in dimensions. It was not begun (on the site of an older structure) until 1498. The works were abandoned when only three bays of the nave had been completed. The choir of four bays has a five-sided apse, and an ambulatory with chapels radiating from it. The transepts are four bays in depth, and the columns throughout the church are circular, with foliaged capitals. The clerestory windows are of particularly grand dimensions. At the junction of the four arms is an octagonal turret surmounted by a quaintly outlined spire.

The colour of the external stonework is a delicate light brown. The west end of the unfinished nave has a plain red-brick wall. Under one of the arches on the north side of the choir is a tabernacle for the Reserved Sacrament, in the Renaissance style, and of singular beauty.)

Rubens.—St Roch interceding with Our Lord to appease the Plague at Alost.

ANTWERP

Nôtre Dame

Rubens.—The Elevation of the Cross ; the Descent from the Cross (in the north and south transepts, respectively) ; the Assumption of the Virgin (the high altarpiece) ; the Resurrection.

De Bakker.—The Last Judgment, with portraits of the Plantin family.

Vaenius (*Otto*).—The Entombment ; the Last Supper.

Francken, L. (the elder).—Christ and the Doctors.

Schut (*Cornelius*).—The Assumption (on the ceiling of the cupola) ; the Holy Ghost surrounded by Angels.

St Jacques

Rubens.—The Holy Family (altarpiece of the chapel in which the painter is interred).

Vos (*Martin de*).—The Temptation of St Antony ; the Martyrdom of St James.

Coxcie (*M.*).—The Baptism of Our Lord.

Vaenius (*Otto*).—The Last Supper.

Jordaens.—The Call of St Peter ; St Carlo Borromeo praying among Persons sick of the Plague.

Schut.—A Pietà.

Orley (*B. Van*).—The Last Judgment.

St Paul

Rubens.—The Scourging of Christ ; the Adoration of the Magi.

Van Dyck.—Christ bearing His Cross.

Jordaens.—The Crucifixion.

Teniers (the elder).—The Seven Acts of Mercy.

St André

Vaenius (*Otto*).—The Crucifixion of St Andrew.

Church of the Augustines

Rubens.—The Marriage of St Catherine.
Van Dyck.—The Ecstasy of St Augustine.
Jordaens.—The Martyrdom of St Appollonia.

St Antony of Padua

Van Dyck.—The Dead Christ.
Rubens.—The Virgin and Child appearing to St Francis.

Church of the Jesuits

Schut.—The Madonna enthroned.
Seghers.—The Crucifixion.
Wappers.—The Virgin interceding; St Francis kneeling before the Virgin.

BRUGES

The Cathedral

Pourbus.—The Last Supper, with Abraham and Elijah.
Van Hoeck.—The Crucifixion.
Backereel.—St Carlo Borromeo administering the Eucharist to the Sick of the Plague.
Seghers.—The Adoration of the Magi.
Bouts (*Dierick*).—The Martyrdom of St Hippolytus; on the outer wings, *en grisaille*, S.S. Charles, Hippolytus, Elizabeth and Margaret.
Van der Meire.—The Crucifixion.
Maes.—SS. Rosalia and Dorothea.
Orley (*Jan Van*).—History of Our Lord, in six large pictures.
Vos (*M. de*).—Consecration of St Eligius.
Janssens.—The Adoration of the Shepherds; the Resurrection (high altarpiece).
Van Oost.—The Triumph of Christ over Time and Death; the Conversion of St Hubert; the Saviour

predicting His Passion; His Appearance after the Resurrection; St Joseph watching the Infant Saviour playing with Shavings.

Gheerardt (*David*).—The Descent from the Cross.

Nôtre Dame

Zegers.—The Adoration of the Magi.

Pourbus.—The Passion and Crucifixion; the Last Supper; the Transfiguration; the Adoration of the Shepherds.

Van Oost.—The Angel warning Joseph and Mary to flee into Egypt; the Adoration of the Infant Jesus; the Triumph of the Church; Our Lord and the Pharisees.

De Crayer.—The Adoration of the Shepherds; St Thomas Aquinas released from Prison by two Angels.

Claeyssens.—The Foundation of the Church of Sta Maria Maggiore at Rome.

Quellin (*Erasmus*). — The Betrothal of St Catherine.

St Jacques

Blondeel (*Lancelot*).—The Martyrdom of SS. Cosmo and Damian.

Van Oost.—The Presentation in the Temple.

Hospital of St John

Memling.—Paintings on the Reliquary of St Ursula; the Marriage of St Catherine (the genuineness of this picture has been questioned); the Epiphany; the Virgin offering an Apple to the Child, with portrait of the donor, Martin van Newenhowen; Head of the Sybil Zambetha, in fifteenth-century costume; the Entombment (attributed by some to Memling, but probably by an inferior but contemporary hand).

Van Oost (the elder).—A Philosopher.

Van Dyck.—The Madonna.

Teniers (the younger).—The Miraculous Draught of Fishes.

Chapel of the Holy Blood

Flemish Paintings of the Fifteenth Century.—Count Theodoric receiving the Holy Blood from Baldwin III. of Flanders; the Bearing of the Cross; the Crucifixion; the Resurrection.

David (*Geehrardt*).—The Descent from the Cross.

Van Oost (the elder).—The Descent from the Cross.

BRUSSELS

Nôtre Dame de la Chapelle

Crayer.—The Appearance of Our Lord to St Mary Magdalene; St Carlo Borromeo administering the Sacrament to the Plague-stricken.

Van Thulden.—Intercession for Souls in Purgatory.

COURTRAI

St Martin

Ryckere (*B. de*).—The Descent of the Holy Ghost; the Creation; the Baptism of Our Lord.

Nôtre Dame

Van Dyck.—The Raising of the Cross.

DIXMUDE

Parish Church

Jordaens.—The Adoration of the Magi.

DENDERMONDE

Nôtre Dame

Van Dyck.—The Crucifixion; the Adoration of the Shepherds.

Crayer.—The Virgin and Saints.

GHENT

The Cathedral

Crayer (*G. de*).—The Decollation of St John the Baptist; the Martyrdom of St Barbara; the Crucifixion; the Assumption; St Macarius praying for those afflicted with the Plague, while he is himself struck with the Pestilence.

Paelinck.—St Colette receiving a Grant from the Magistrates of Ghent to establish a Convent.

De Cauwer.—The Baptism of Our Lord.

Janssens.—A Pietà.

Pourbus.—Our Lord in the Midst of the Doctors.

Van Eyck.—The Adoration of the Lamb.[1]

Rubens.—St Bavon renouncing the Profession of a Soldier to enter the Convent of St Amand as a Monk.

Vaenius (*Otto*).—The Raising of Lazarus.

Seghers.—The Martyrdom of St Lieven.

Coxcie (*M.*).—The Seven Works of Mercy.

Huffel.—St Lambert carrying Coals in his Surplice to light the Incense.

Rombaut.—The Descent from the Cross.

St Michel

Van Dyck.—The Crucifixion.

Crayer.—The Assumption of St Catherine; the Descent of the Holy Ghost; SS. Bernard, Joseph and George worshipping the Trinity.

Van Mander.—SS. Sebastian and Carlo Borromeo.

St Pierre

Janssens.—The Miraculous Draught of Fishes; the Liberation of St Peter.

Roose.—The Nativity.

Quellin (*Erasmus*).—The Triumph of the Church.

[1] See Appendix.

Van den Avond.—The Holy Family.

Seghers.—Christ healing a Blind Man; the Raising of Lazarus.

Thulden (*Th. Van*).—Triumph of the Catholic Church.

Crayer.—St Benedict recognising the Equerry of the Gothic King Totilas.

HERENTHALS

Ste Waudru

Raephorst.—The Martyrdom of St Crispin..

LIERRE

St Gommaire

Memling.—The Marriage of the Virgin.

LOUVAIN

St Pierre

Bouts (*Dierick*).—The Martyrdom of St Erasmus; the Last Supper (the central portion of a triptych; one of the wings, representing the Feast of the Passover, and Elijah in the Wilderness, being preserved in the Museum at Berlin, and the other, representing Abraham and Melchisedec, and the Gathering of the Manna, in the Pinakothek at Munich).[1]

Matsys (*Quentin*).—The Holy Family; on the shutters, the Death of St Anne, and the Expulsion of Joachim from the Temple.

De Crayer.—The Holy Family.

Van der Baeren.—The Martyrdom of St Dorothea.

St Jacques

De Crayer.—St Hubert.

[1] Now in the Brussels gallery.

MALINES

Cathedral

Van Dyck.—The Crucifixion.

St Jean

Rubens.—The Adoration of the Magi,; on the insides of the shutters, the Decollation of St John the Baptist, and St John the Evangelist in the Cauldron of Boiling Oil ; on the outsides, the Baptism of Our Lord, and St John writing the Apocalypse in the Isle of Patmos. (This picture forms the high altarpiece.)

Nôtre Dame

Rubens.—The Miraculous Draught of Fishes ; on the shutters, the Tribute Money taken from the Mouth of the Fish ; Tobias and the Fish ; SS. Peter and Andrew. (This picture forms the high altarpiece.)

OUDENARDE

Ste Walburge

Crayer.—The Assumption.

TOURNAI

Cathedral

Rubens.—The Rescue of the Souls from Purgatory.
Jordaens.—The Crucifixion.
De Negre.—The Holy Family with a Glory of Angels.
Blondoel.—Subjects from the Life of the Virgin.
Gallait.—Christ restoring Sight to the Blind.

YPRES

St Martin

Pourbus.—The Story of the Fall of Man.

Thomas.—The Virgin presenting the Holy Child to a Canon and six Choristers in the Interior of the Cathedral.

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APPENDIX

The following churches and cathedrals mentioned in this book were damaged in the War.

CORTEMARK.—Church seriously damaged, but now rebuilt.

COURTRAI.—The towers of Nôtre Dame were slightly injured when the bridge into the town was blown up by the Germans.

DINANT.—A window and an altar in the Cathedral of Nôtre Dame were destroyed, also the bulb-shaped spire, but it has been replaced.

DIXMUDE.—The Parish Church of St Nicolas, with its rood-loft and Jordaens' picture "The Adoration of the Magi," was entirely destroyed. It has been rebuilt.

LIÉGE.—The roof of the cathedral was damaged.

LIERRE.—The beautiful ancient glass in the windows of the Church of St Gommaire, and the eighth-century Chapel of St Pierre were destroyed.

LOUVAIN.—In the Church of St Pierre the right-side aisle, with the exception of its vaulted ceiling, was completely destroyed; also its chapels and altars and a quaint statue of Our Lord which, legend relates, captured and held a thief who had broken into the church. The west tower was also burnt by the Germans, and the chimes destroyed.

MALINES.—The cathedral was seriously damaged during the bombardments, in which two hundred buildings were totally destroyed and over one thousand badly damaged.

MESSINES.—The church destroyed, but now rebuilt.

MONS.—Ste Waudru's Church, one of the finest in Belgium, fortunately escaped injury.

NIEUPORT.—Every building, including the church, was razed to the ground, but has now been, for the most part, rebuilt.

TERMONDE.—The condition of one of the pillars at Nôtre Dame shows how narrowly this edifice escaped destruction.

YPRES.—The Cathedral of St Martin was entirely destroyed, only a small portion of the cloisters remaining. It is to be rebuilt. St Jacques, St Pierre and St Nicolas were seriously damaged, but are being rebuilt.

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